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The UK's only independent PlayStation magazine



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GREATNESS HAS ARRIVED



HONESTLY, YOU SHOULD

have seen the crowd that gathered when a finished retail PS4 arrived in the **Play** offices. It was like we had a huge neon

sign that screamed 'FREE MONEY-FILLED DOUGHNUTS' hanging over us and lo, the horde awakened. Everyone wanted to see it, to touch it, to smell it. And despite the fact that we were really quite busy and sort of needed them all to go away, we just couldn't bring ourselves to douse the excitement. After all, with the previous generation dragging on for as long as it did, it's been a good while since we've seen that kind of interest in gaming – there was no way in hell I was gonna be the one that hit the sprinklers. I don't want to be that guy.

But now everyone's had a go. Everybody has told us how much they like the DualShock 4. And everyone's all out of 'oooooh's and 'aaaaaah's for the time being. But that's fine with us, because we want to just get on and play. We've got the system set up perfectly (and thought it best to pass this know-how down to you as well) and as soon as this issue is out the door, I fully intend to kick back with *Killzone* and *Assassin's Creed* on PS4 and just go hard. I deserve it, and if you had seen the oceans of blood, sweat and tears that went into making this issue so comprehensive a launch guide, you'd be a monster to disagree.

So get your new console hooked up, buzz through our handy advice about how to make it really sing and let's play – after being so patient in waiting for the next generation to kick off, you deserve it as much as I do. Enjoy the issue and, as ever, we'd love for you to let us know what you think. Well, if you can put down the DualShock 4 long enough to drop us a line, that is...

LUKE ALBIGÉS
DEPUTY EDITOR
@LukemonMGJ

CURRENTLY PLAYING
Killzone: Shadow Fall

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PLAY⁴ Contents

All the best PlayStation 4 launch reviews

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08 PS4 HOW-TO

Overwhelmed by the potential of your new PS4? Let us walk you through getting the most out of your machine!

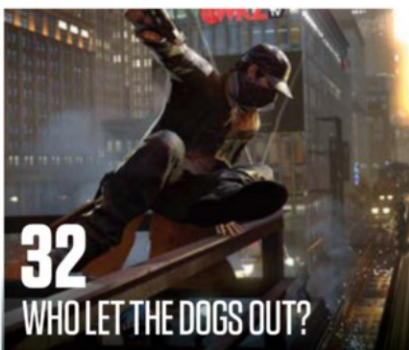
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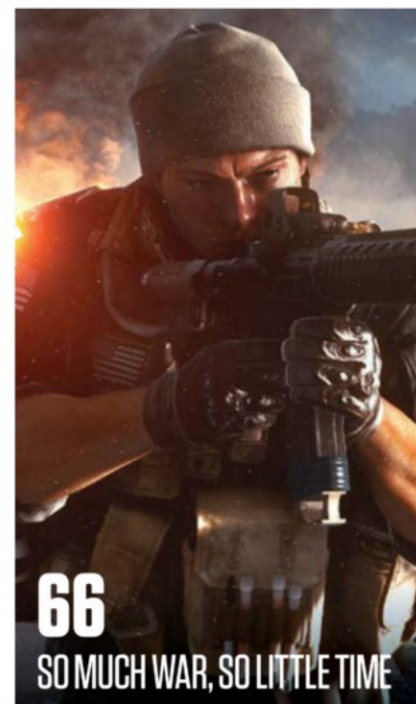
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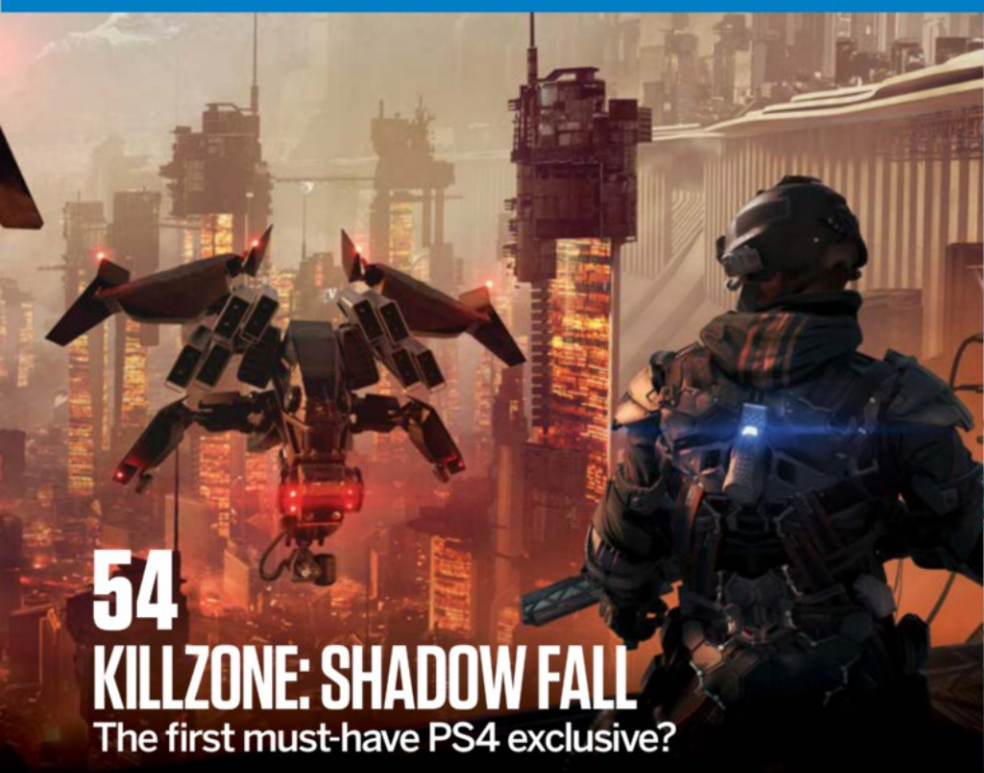
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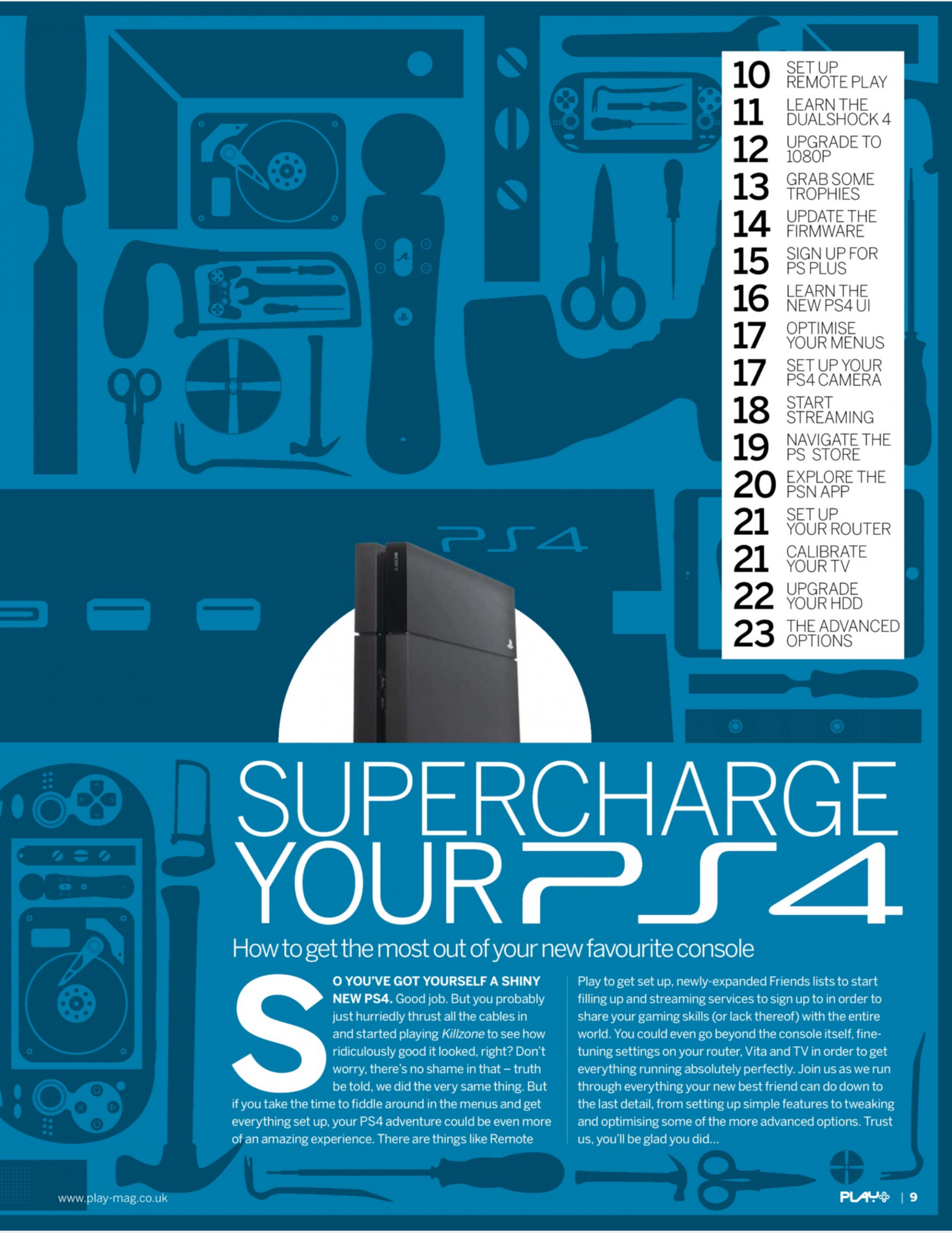
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SUPERCHARGE YOUR PS4

How to get the most out of your new favourite console

S O YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF A SHINY NEW PS4. Good job. But you probably just hurriedly thrust all the cables in and started playing *Killzone* to see how ridiculously good it looked, right? Don't worry, there's no shame in that – truth be told, we did the very same thing. But if you take the time to fiddle around in the menus and get everything set up, your PS4 adventure could be even more of an amazing experience. There are things like Remote

Play to get set up, newly-expanded Friends lists to start filling up and streaming services to sign up to in order to share your gaming skills (or lack thereof) with the entire world. You could even go beyond the console itself, fine-tuning settings on your router, Vita and TV in order to get everything running absolutely perfectly. Join us as we run through everything your new best friend can do down to the last detail, from setting up simple features to tweaking and optimising some of the more advanced options. Trust us, you'll be glad you did...

SETUP REMOTE PLAY

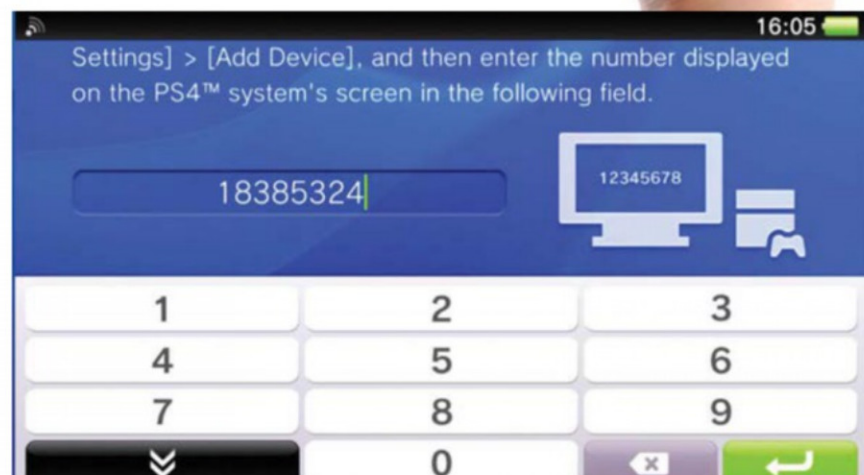
DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Being able to play PS4 games and navigate your console content on Vita is one of the coolest features of PS4, but it takes a little setting up. Follow these steps and you'll be playing remotely in no time.



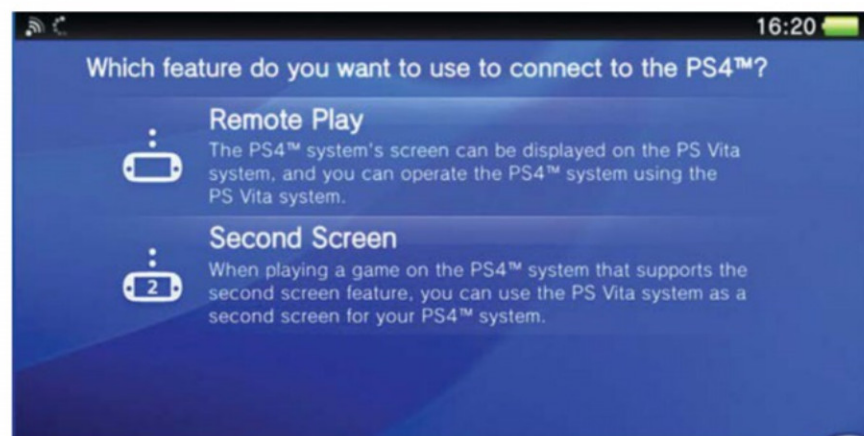
SYNC YOUR VITA

2 On your PS4, go into the main Settings menu and navigate down to PS Vita Connection Settings. Pick the bottom option, 'Add Device', and you'll get a unique eight-digit code. Start the PS4 Link app on Vita and input your code when prompted.



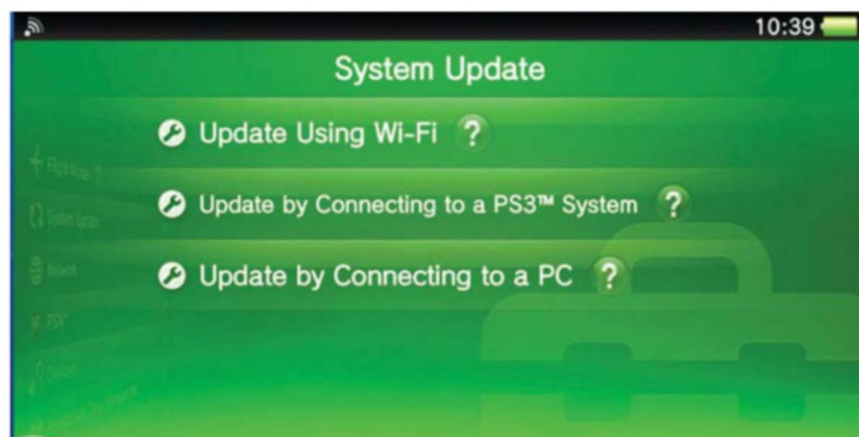
CONNECT YOUR VITA

4 Fire up the PS4 Link app on Vita. Remote Play is used to take control of the console and its games remotely, while Second Screen allows games to use Vita as a secondary display. Pick Remote Play and the Vita should automatically connect to the PS4.



UPDATE YOUR VITA

1 Before doing anything else, you'll want to make sure your Vita is running the latest firmware – 3.0 or higher will do the trick. This update sticks a new PS4 Link app on your Vita home screen and this is your ticket to remote access.



CHECK YOUR SETTINGS

3 Back in the PS Vita Connection Settings menu, ensure that both the 'Enable Remote Play' and 'Connect Directly With PS Vita' options are checked – the first is essential in order to allow this function, while the second lets PS4 and Vita communicate directly.



PLAY!

5 And just like that, you're good to go. You've got the vast majority of your PS4 catalogue with you wherever you go, Wi-Fi permitting. Connecting directly to the console, via the same network and from a different network will each result in an increasing amount of input lag.



LEARN THE DUALSHOCK 4

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Your new DualShock 4 is vastly improved from the, frankly, pants PS3 pad. Before we get to the good stuff, let's go over what is largely the same:

ANALOG STICKS

The analog sticks have far more resistance than before, offering increased accuracy to FPS players in particular. They also feature a lipped rim so your sweaty fingers won't slip off.

HOME BUTTON

The PS button is back, and once again will take you from a game to the main menu, or vice versa. It's as useful as ever.

TOUCH PAD

Sitting between them lies the new touchpad, which can also be clicked in as another button. We've already seen the touchpad used in games for things like navigating maps and selecting items, and it's a great addition.

OPTIONS

The Start button has been replaced by Options, which essentially serves the same purpose in most situations.

SHARE

Select is gone altogether, replaced by Share. This button allows the player to upload screenshots or video, or stream directly over Twitch or Ustream.

LIGHT BAR

The top of the pad has a light bar, used to communicate with the PlayStation camera. It can also be programmed to change colour at certain points in games by developers.

SHOULDER AND TRIGGERS

The shoulder buttons and triggers have been vastly improved. R1 and L1 feel sturdier and have a satisfying weight to them. The triggers are now concave rather than convex and again feature a lipped end, so your finger stays in perfect position. They feel excellent.

D-PAD

The D-pad now sits in a shallow bowl, but is otherwise the classic PlayStation D-pad we know and love. That's a good thing, especially for fighting game fans that prefer pad to stick.

FACE BUTTONS

The face buttons are as similar as always, although the build quality and sturdiness seems slightly better than we are used to.

SPEAKER

The DS4 also has a speaker built in, allowing games to transmit audio directly through the pad. *Killzone Shadow Fall*, for example, has audio diaries play through the pad rather than the television.

HEADSET JACK

On the underside of the pad is a headset jack, allowing players to plug directly into the controller rather than the television. Players can choose to transmit just voice or all audio to the headset.

OVER-ALL

The DualShock 4 as a whole is larger and heavier than the DS3. It's satisfying to hold and use, with an overall feeling of superior quality compared to its predecessor. Small changes, like the sticks being further apart, make it that much more comfortable and ergonomic to use.

UPGRADE TO 1080P

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

With pretty much every decent modern TV supporting 'full HD' and 1080p finally becoming the native standard on PS4, there's more reason than ever to plump for the highest possible resolution. And the difference between 720p, 1080i and 1080p is far greater than many people think, especially when viewed on larger displays.

576i

Or, as you probably know it, standard definition. This is the resolution of non-HDTVs and it's significantly worse than even EDTV (Enhanced Definition, or 480p). It doesn't take a particularly well-trained eye to spot a standard definition signal – boot up a PS3 while holding the Power button down to boot it into Safe mode (which drops to standard def in case you've connected to an older display) and you'll see the difference immediately. Pretty much every modern TV is at least HD Ready, relegating 576i to the annals of history.

1080p

The native resolution for all bar a handful of announced PS4 games, 1080p is going to be the next-gen standard. Compared to 720p – the PS3 standard and the resolution to which many Xbox One games are still limited – a 1080p image contains over double the amount of pixels and visual fidelity is greatly improved as a result. As mentioned, it's particularly noticeable on larger displays so if you're in the market for a new TV to show off what your PS4 can really do, we'd recommend something in the 37"+ range. In the case of next-gen gaming, bigger really is better.

SD - 576i
720x576

HD - 720p
1280x720

FULL HD - 1080p
1920x1080

HD - 1080i
1920x1080

720p

Although PS3 allows for 1080p to be selected as the preferred resolution, the simple truth is that precious few games run natively at that resolution – many simply force a shift to a lower resolution on start-up, while others upscale to 1080p. For this reason, you might not have noticed any real difference in PS3 games whatever the selected resolution and on anything less than a 32" display, you likely still won't. But if you're looking to get the most out of your PS4, you'll want a larger, full-HD TV. Trust us, you'll really see the difference.

1080i

The higher number fools many into thinking that this is the superior option over 720p, but the truth is that they're fairly comparable. The key difference comes from the letter at the end – 'p' stands for 'progressive' meaning the whole display is refreshed at once, while 'i' is for 'interlaced', which basically means running at twice the refresh rate but only ever rendering half the display at any given time. There are pros and cons to both 720p and 1080i, though progressive tends to give a crisper display despite the lower overall pixel count.

BOOST YOUR TROPHY LEVEL

KNACK

42 trophies

1 4 9 28

Knack looks to be a challenging Platinum despite its child-friendly looks. Completing the game on hard and collecting a ton of relics should net you most of them, and making sure to find every hidden chest and make every item is important also. Completing all chapters on Very Hard difficulty is perhaps the toughest Trophy, and you need to finish Hard mode before you even unlock the option – in some ways a blessing in disguise, as you'll need plenty of training. Expect to die in one hit and restart with several minutes of lost progress over and over again. You'll need the patience of a monk for this one. Another tricky task is Combo Professional, achieving 50 consecutive hits with the Combo Meter equipped. First of all you need to create the Combo Meter, which is a matter of finding all the parts in the hidden chests dotted about the levels. Once it's made and equipped, you'll need to land 50 hits in a row without taking damage yourself. Find either a large group of foes or a boss you can smash repeatedly for the best results.



DIFFICULTY

★★★★★

CALL OF DUTY: GHOSTS

51 trophies

1 3 0 47

Once again most of the Trophies for the new *Call Of Duty* are to be found in the campaign, with none whatsoever earned from competitive multiplayer. It's possible to get every single campaign-related Trophy in one run, by starting on Veteran and making sure to collect every hidden Rorke File as you progress. There are also several specific Trophies for performing certain actions on certain stages, such as pouncing on ten enemies as Riley or not missing any shots with the remote-controlled sniper rifle. Aside from the story and a single trophy earned for finishing round 20 in Safeguard (horde mode), the remaining Trophies are found in the new Extinction mode. Some of these are quite hard, such as escaping with all four members alive or finishing the game while using a difficulty-boosting relic. Make sure you've got three good teammates, if you can.

ASSASSIN'S CREED IV: BLACK FLAG

51 trophies

1 1 13 36

The newest *Assassin's Creed* Platinum seems possible for most, but is going to take some time. Finishing the main story should once again be your first port of call, making sure to 100 per cent every story mission for the By The Book Trophy. Once the pesky story is out of the way, mopping up the collectables is next, earning enough money to fully upgrade the Jackdaw and making sure to explore every undersea shipwreck. Taking down all four legendary ships for the Devil Of The Caribbean Trophy is next to impossible without a fully upgraded ship of your own, so hold off before attempting it. Perhaps the most time-consuming Trophy is Committed To The Cause, tasking you with reaching the max rank of 55 in multiplayer.

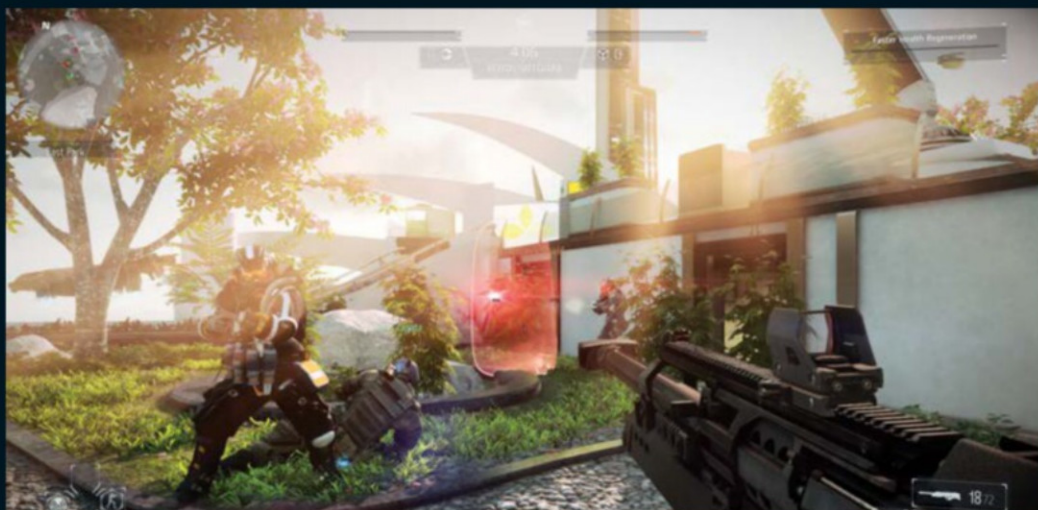


KILLZONE SHADOW FALL

33 trophies

1 6 8 18

This is another Platinum that, while not particularly difficult, is going to take a lot of time. Finishing the campaign on Hard will net you a decent amount of trophies along the way, although Shadows Cannot Be Killed, which requires you to finish the entire campaign without dying, is obviously best tried on Easy. Other situational Trophies, like killing 5 enemies while ziplining and finding all the collectibles, can be mopped up afterwards. Once again, most of your time will be spent in multiplayer. Multiplayer Elite tasks you with completing 400 challenges, and combined with Trophies for maxing out every ability and unlocking every weapon attachment, expect to spend a decent 100 or so hours blasting online.



UPDATE TO THE LATEST FIRMWARE

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

The PlayStation 4 you take out of the box is still on its factory firmware, the same as is used on demo models and display units. As such, it's missing a number of features that you'll want to enable as soon as possible. At the time of writing, the latest firmware is the initial 1.5 update, though it might be that a newer version has been released by the time you read this. Either way, the update is essential for some really basic features and you can download it from Sony's site to a USB stick or update the console online. If you can't get online, you can contact Sony directly on 0844 736 0595 (UK only – check playstation.com for your local support number) to request an update disc. However you choose to update, these are the features you won't get without upgrading the firmware to 1.5 or higher.

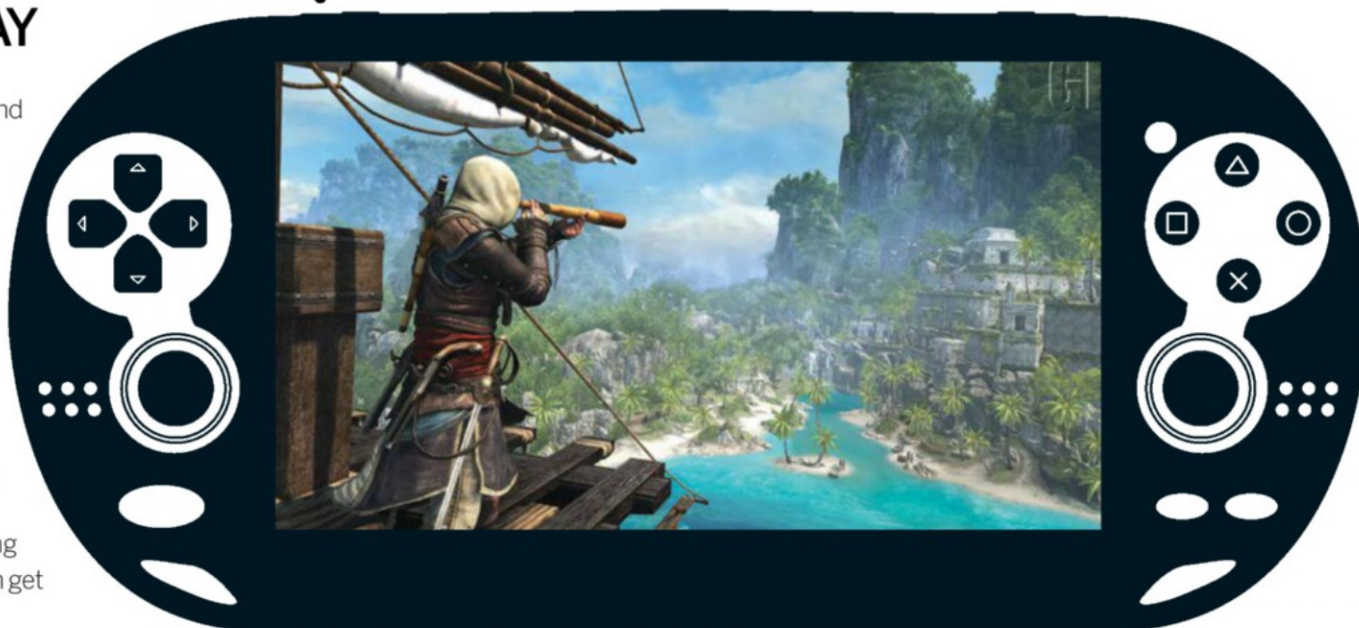
ONLINE FEATURES

It's long been the case that you haven't been able to go online without upgrading to the latest version of the firmware as soon as it's available and, unsurprisingly, that's no different on PS4. So whether you want to fiddle around with new features like Party Chat and the expanded Friends list or just want to do some good old-fashioned multiplayer gaming, you'll need 1.5 first.



REMOTE PLAY

Being able to use your PlayStation Vita as a second screen, an additional controller or even the primary display for your new PlayStation 4 is an incredibly cool feature, though again you'll need to upgrade the firmware to 1.5 in order to access it – the PS4 won't be able to communicate with the Vita's latest firmware version otherwise, meaning the whole thing won't even get off the ground.



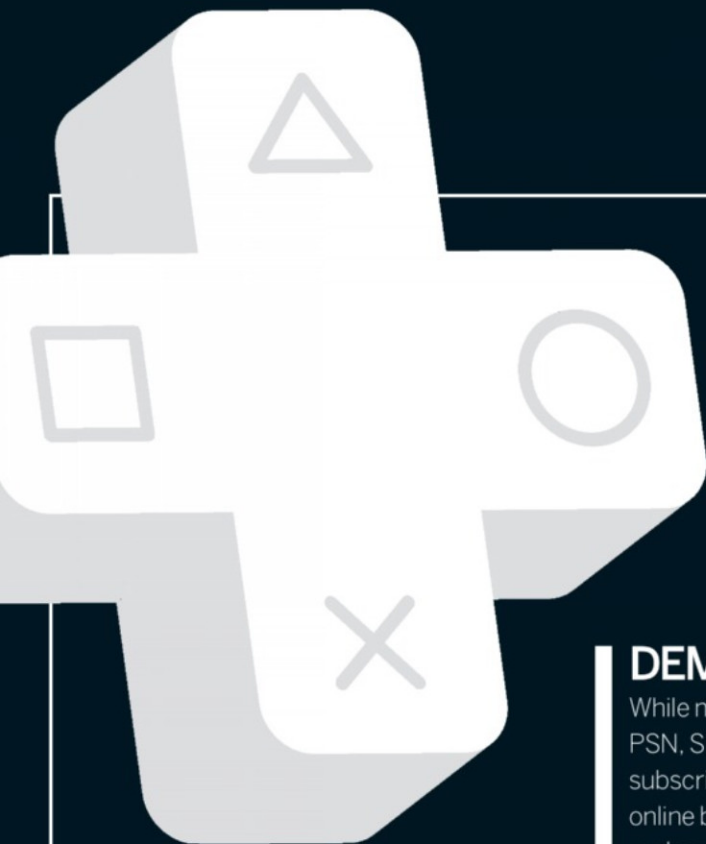
DVD/BLU-RAY PLAYBACK

An interesting omission from the 'factory settings' firmware, basic movie playback is one of the features enabled by the firmware update. This is one of the few offline features blocked without the update, hence why Sony has pledged to offer discs to those who can't (or won't) update online.



SHARING/STREAMING

PlayStation 4's connected features have been tweaked and improved right up to the last minute, hence this only coming as part of the update. It's not like the features needed to be on the hardware before launch anyway, since the servers didn't even go live until launch day and these functions would not have worked anyway.



SIGN UP FOR PLAYSTATION PLUS

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Many frugal gamers will tell you that PS Plus was one of the best things to come out of the last console generation and we'd struggle to disagree – with subscribers offered free games, numerous hefty discounts and early beta access to some huge games, it really has been an appealing prospect. So while many expressed concern about PS4's online multiplayer being locked away behind this paywall, those in the know just went along with it. Frankly, if you're online with a PlayStation console, you should probably be on PS Plus as a matter of course, and here's why.

EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS

PlayStation Network sales are getting better and better all the time, and on top of that, PlayStation Plus subscribers often get an extra chunk of money off their games too. This can bring awesome games down to just pennies if you catch the right deal at the right time, and it's worth noting that while Instant Game Collection titles are only playable while you're a subscriber, titles bought with your PlayStation Plus discount are yours to keep forever if you wish.

DEMOS/BETAS

While most trial content is free for anyone browsing PSN, Sony tends to keep the best stuff back for its subscribers. Over recent months, this has included online beta testing for *Battlefield 4* and *Dark Souls II*, and we're sure the trend will continue on PS4. In fact, we'd probably put money on the first demos of big releases like *inFamous: Second Son* being offered to PS Plus subscribers before the rest of the world gets their hands on them.

ONLINE MULTIPLAYER (PS4 ONLY)

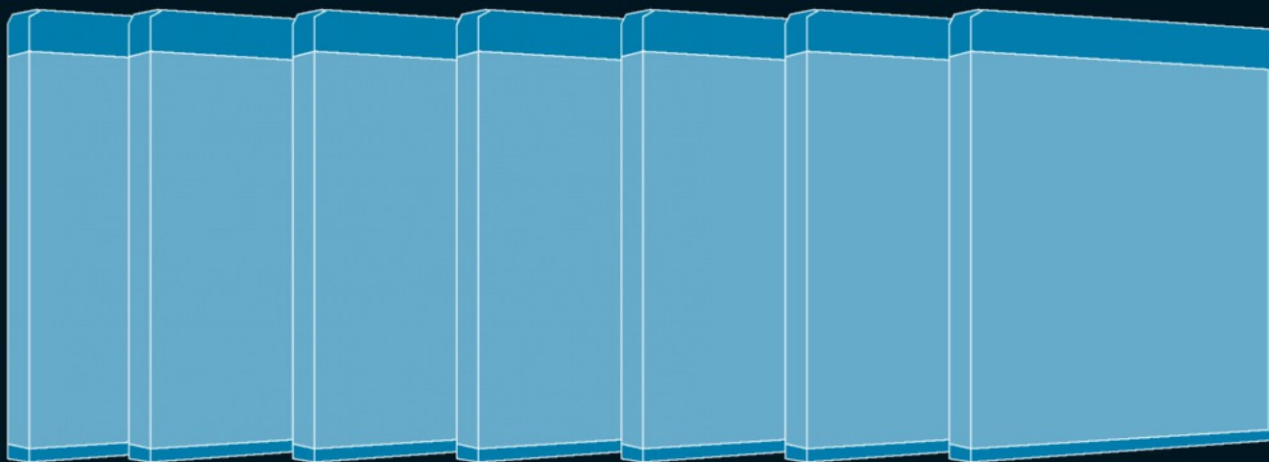
While online play has always previously been free on Sony platforms, this generation will be the first where you'll need a PS Plus subscription in order to play over the internet. It's not true of all games – some free-to-play titles will be exempt from this rule, for instance – but we're sure that all major PS4 games will demand PlayStation Plus in order to access their online features.



INSTANT GAME COLLECTION

This is the big one for most people. Each month, Sony offers a new selection of games across all PlayStation formats that will be available free to subscribers for a limited time, as well as a larger catalogue of free titles that stay live for longer. These can be played for as long as you remain a PS Plus subscriber and even if there's not room on your hard drive for all the free stuff, you can still get it – simply attempt a download of a free title to the point where it tells you that you don't have enough free space, after which you'll be able to find the game in your Download History – as long as you're still a subscriber. PS4 titles *Resogun* and *Contrast* will be the first next-gen games to grace the service, with indies *Don't Starve* and *The Binding Of Isaac* set to follow suit, both apparently due to join the Instant Game Collection when they launch early next year.

“WHILE MOST TRIAL CONTENT ON PSN IS FREE, SONY TENDS TO KEEP THE BEST STUFF BACK FOR ITS SUBSCRIBERS”



THE PS4 UI

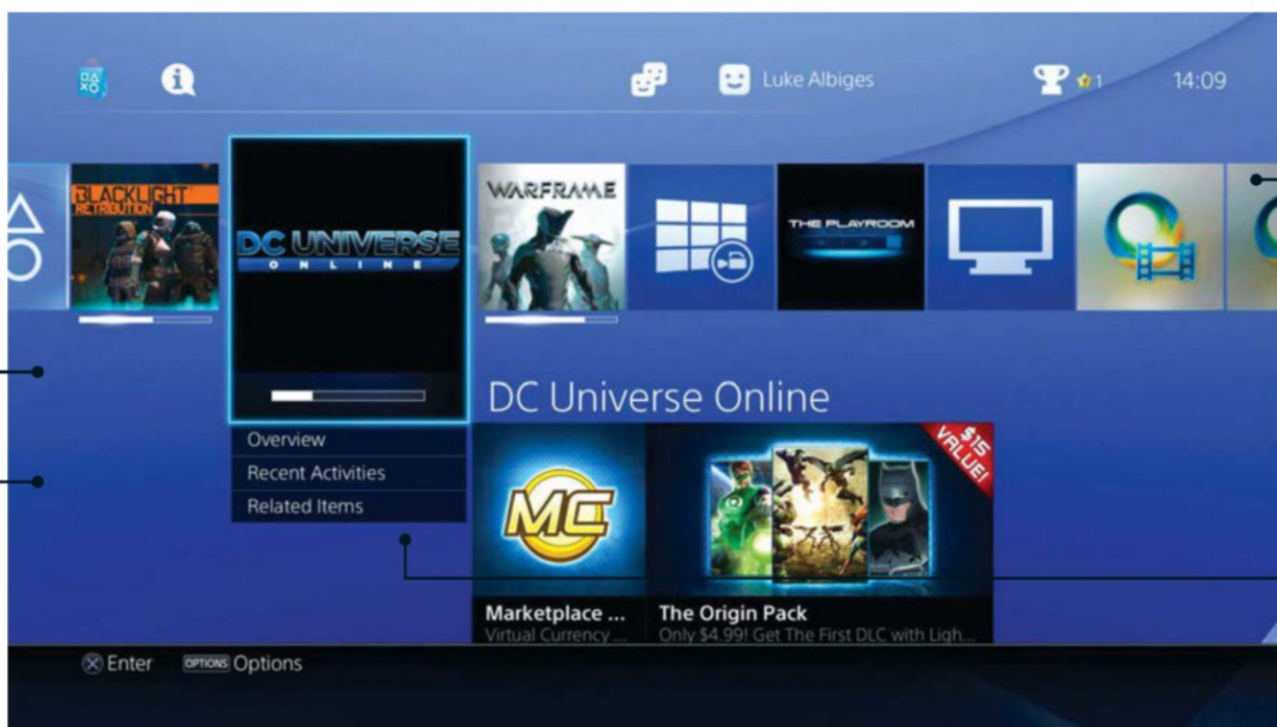
DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Welcome to the PS4. This is what you'll be seeing every time you turn your console on, so you better get good and familiar with it. It's a bit different from the PS3 interface, but don't worry, startled consumer - we are here for you. Take a seat and soak in some knowledge...

Pressing Up takes you to the XMB, which will be a familiar sight to PS3 owners. This is where you'll be able to access most of the 'behind the scenes' functionality of your PS4.

Boot up the console and you'll see a row of your most recently used software and apps. The stuff you used last shows up on the left for easy access. Stuff like the web browser, live streams and video and music services are always on this bar somewhere.

All the way to the left is 'What's New', a live feed of the gaming activity of you and your PSN friends.



Scroll all the way to the right to access your library - an easy way to see all your games in one go.

Press Down from any game on your bar to access recent activities, to see what your friends have been doing in said game and related items, to check news and DLC related to the title.

To the far left of the XMB is the PlayStation Store. This will be your port of call for buying digital games, movies and music.

Next to it is Notifications, an easy way to check all recently earned Trophies, game invitations, downloads and uploads in one place.

Friends, Messages and Party all serve similar purposes to what they did on PS3. Gamers can now chat in a party while playing separate games, a welcome feature.

The Profile button gives you easy access to your Trophies, recent activities and friends at a glance, as well as letting you change your display picture and other details.

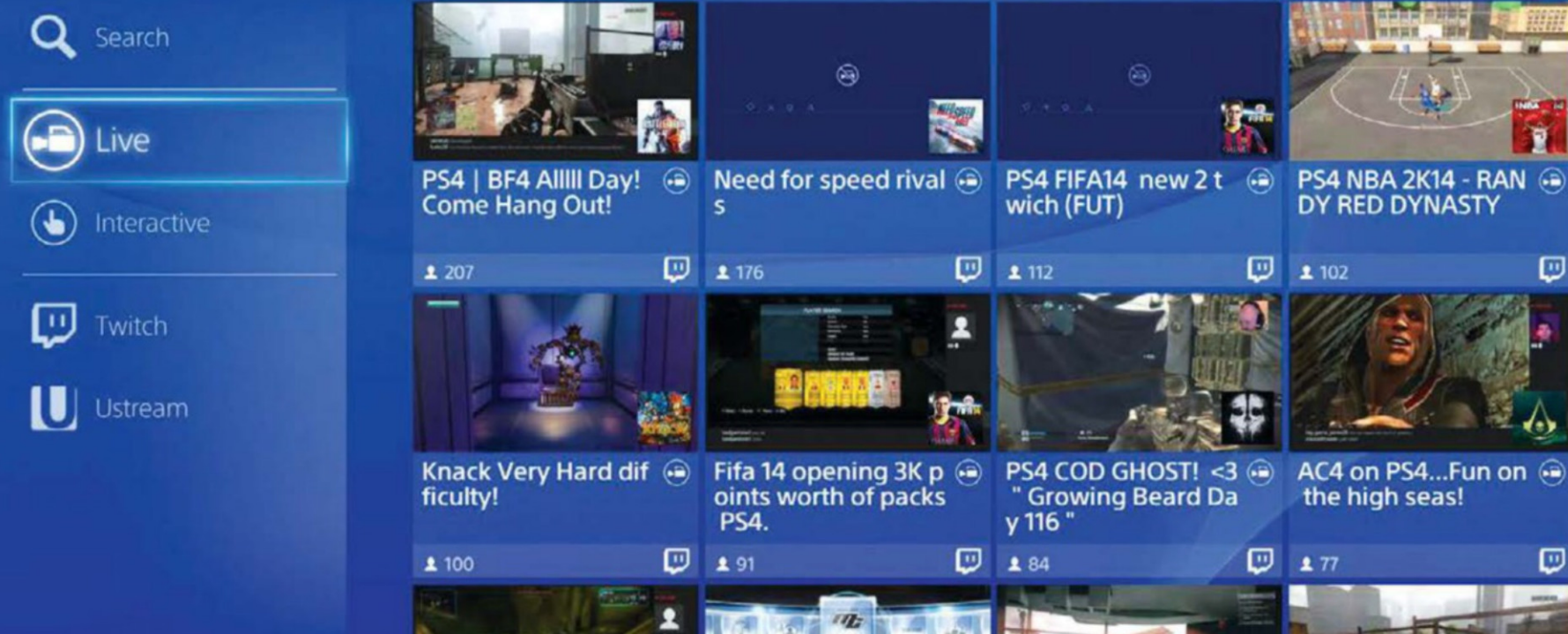
Next up is Trophies. A new feature tracks the rareness of Trophies, measuring how many gamers worldwide have earned each one.

Settings is where you can tweak all the little options and create the optimal PS4 experience for you - we'll cover it in this feature later on.

Last up is Power, allowing you to log out, switch to Standby mode or turn off the console altogether.

Hold down the PS button at any time to access a sub-menu allowing you to close games and apps, adjust devices and headphone volume, log out and turn off the PS4.





OPTIMISE YOUR MENUS

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Being able to quickly and easily access the content you want is crucial on any console, so it's probably a good idea to have a fiddle with each of the options and see which works best for you. On the current UI, everything is just stored along one big line of content, with games and apps prioritised by how recently they were last used. It's not ideal, but it does make some methods of getting around the dashboard easier than others...

PS MOVE

The linear nature of the dashboard makes it easy to navigate with Move, and it's the same as it was on PlayStation3 – hold down the trigger on the wand and swipe in the direction you want to scroll. You don't even need the camera hooked up (or at all), making it a decent way to navigate for media or for a second logged-in player.

CONTROLLER

The default option and the most practical of the bunch, simply using the DualShock 4 to navigate the menus is a cinch. With both Share and Options buttons easily to hand, it's simple to both get to the content you want and fiddle with settings or snap screens. Oddly, the touchpad can't be used for navigation (at least not at the moment – we wouldn't be surprised to see it added in a future update) but otherwise it's business as usual.

VOICE COMMANDS

If you've got a PlayStation Camera hooked up, you can navigate the dashboard without so much as touching the controller. The catalogue of recognised voice commands is limited at the moment – you can't turn the machine on with your voice, but you can jump straight to games or apps. You can either say 'PlayStation' out loud or tap L2 to start it listening, followed by either the name of a game then 'Start' to begin. 'Log In', 'Power' and 'Take Screenshot' all work as well, plus there'll be more commands coming in the post-launch months.

PS VITA

Once you've set up Remote Play, Vita can be used instead of (or in addition to) a controller in order to navigate the dashboard with. The advantage here is that you can use your Vita's screen instead of the main TV display – you can quickly have a look at the PlayStation Store while watching TV, or send friends messages while watching a movie. Useful.

SET UP THE CAMERA

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

There's not an awful lot to say about setting up the camera, since the PS4 will run a simple setup process as soon as you connect the PlayStation Camera for the first time. This easy sequence of steps will run you through the basics – having the camera on a flat surface beneath your TV, having it facing the right way (this part is particularly tricky) and so on.

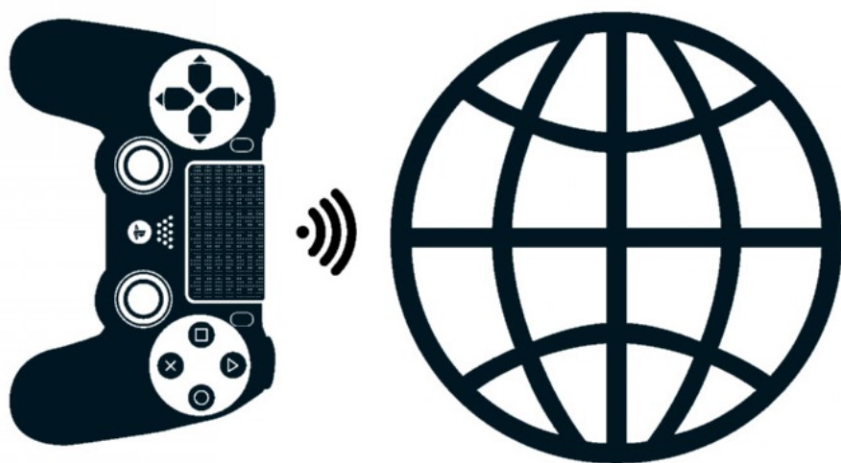
You can hop into The Playroom to make sure everything is working properly (the quick setup method worked perfectly for us) but if you're having problems with face recognition or anything like that, you can adjust the depth of the camera in the Settings menu – it's under Devices and all you need to do is stick your face in a box on-screen and the PS4 will do the rest automatically.



START STREAMING

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

You can now share your gaming experiences with the world on the fly, though you'll have to do a little prep work first. Here's how to take your first steps towards becoming an internet celebrity...



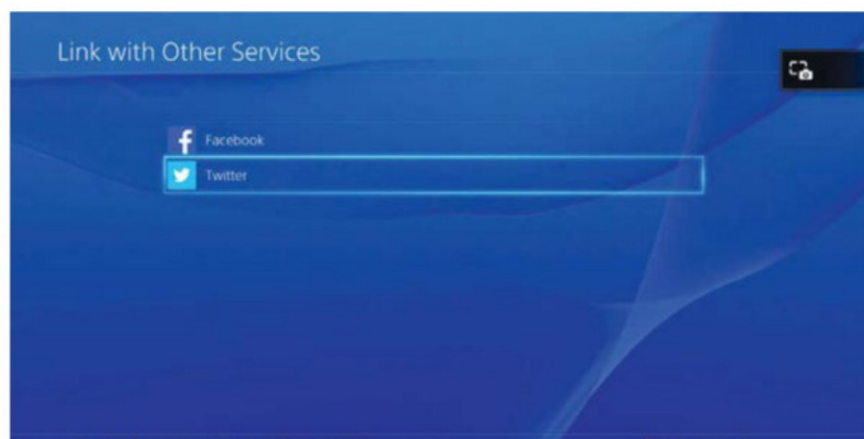
START PLAYING

2 Streaming options are unavailable during dashboard operations and apps/movie playback, but the option for streaming will join the video and screenshot options in the Share menu once you're playing a game. You can set up the Camera and a headset at this point if you want to.



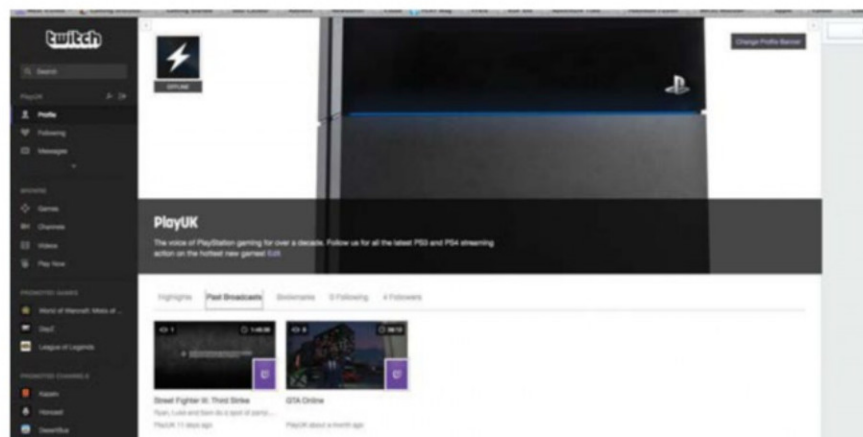
SYNC PSN AND STREAMING

4 With your option locked down, select which of the two streaming services you'd like to use and log in using the details you provided when you signed in with them, not your PSN login details. Once your accounts are linked, this part of the process can be skipped in future.



SIGN UP TO TWITCH/USTREAM

1 The first part of the process is to sign up for Twitch or Ustream (or both). Twitch allows video content to be archived while Ustream doesn't, but it does seem the slightly more reliable service for viewers. Our advice? Sign up for both and try them out, then stick with the one you prefer.



HIT THE SHARE BUTTON

3 By default, this will take you to the menu from which you can choose how to share. Pick 'Broadcast Video' and you'll come to another crossroads where you pick which service to stream to. Before you do, hit the Options button and set up your stream.



SHOW THE WORLD YOUR SKILLS

5 And you're good to go! You can keep track of comments in the bar on the right and see how many people are watching you via the icons above or, if you choose to disable comments on-screen from the Options menu, you can stick with a normal full-screen view.

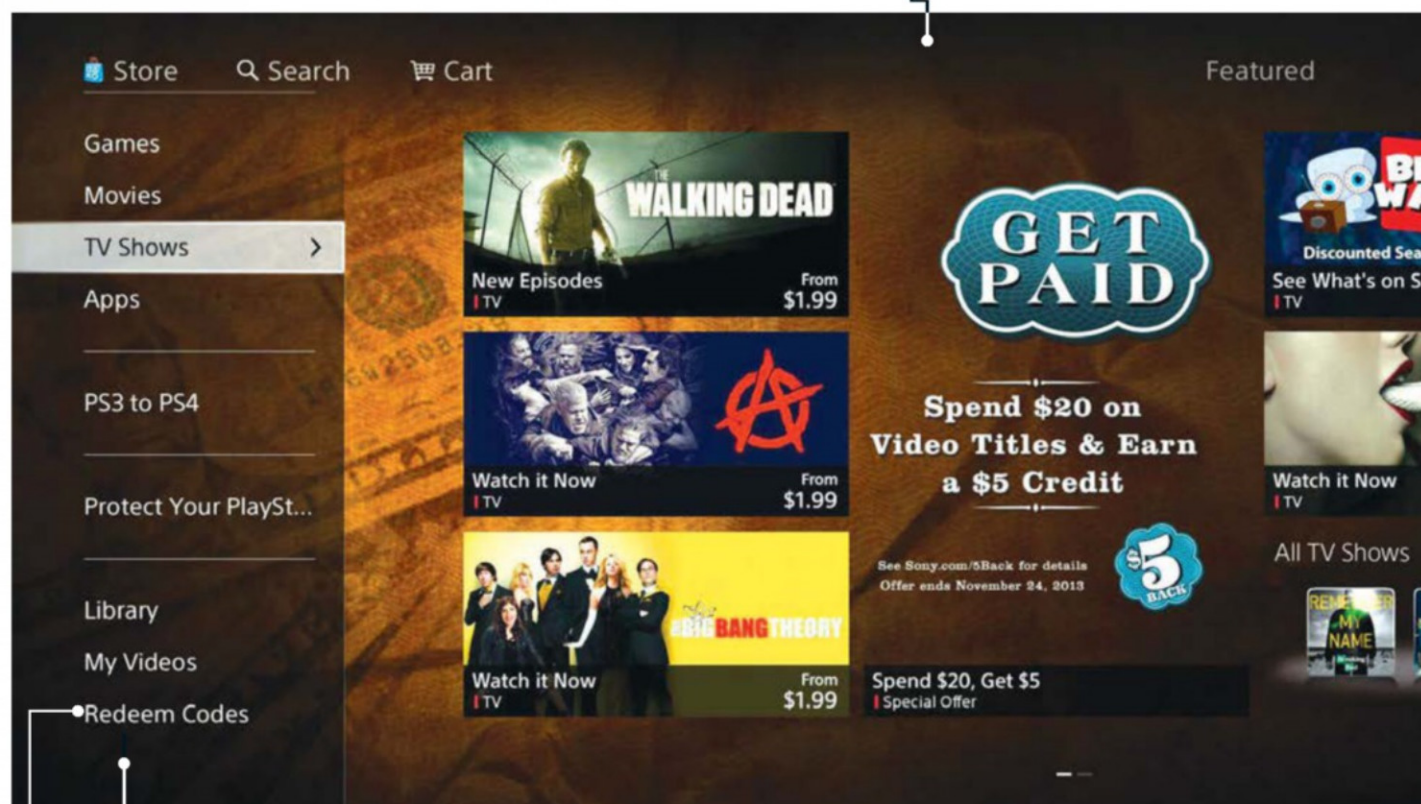


EXPLORE THE STORE

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

We are living in the digital age, and with a huge 500GB hard drive, there's plenty of room on your PS4 for games. But where do you buy them?

The PS Store on PS4 is similar to the design of the PS3 version, so it should feel familiar to most of you.



A list of categories runs down the left side of the screen, allowing the player to quickly choose from games, movies, apps and more.

At the bottom of the list is the option to redeem codes – if you receive a DLC code with a game or purchase a PS Plus card from a store, this is where you go to cash it in.

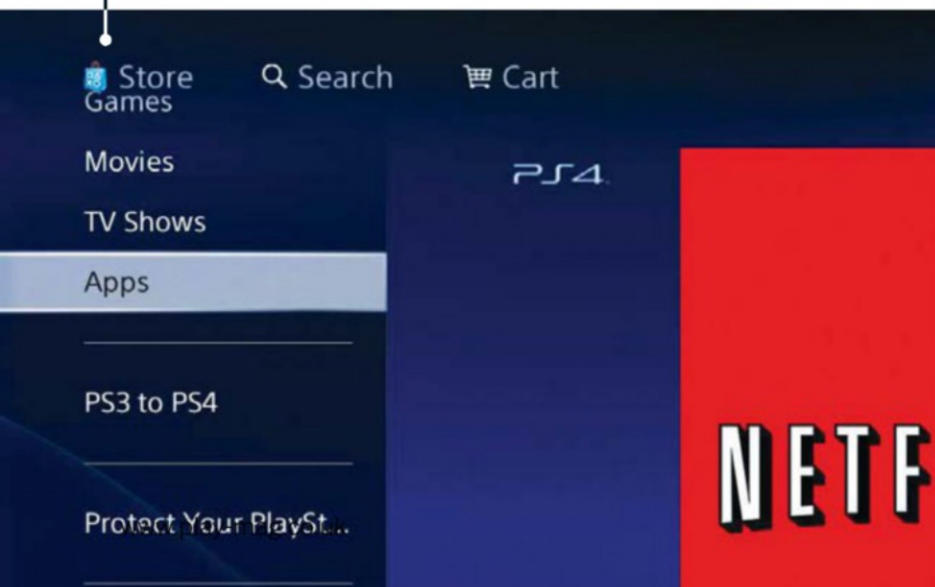
Scrolling to the top of the list and pressing Up takes you to three quick links to the Store homepage, a Search bar or your current Shopping Cart.



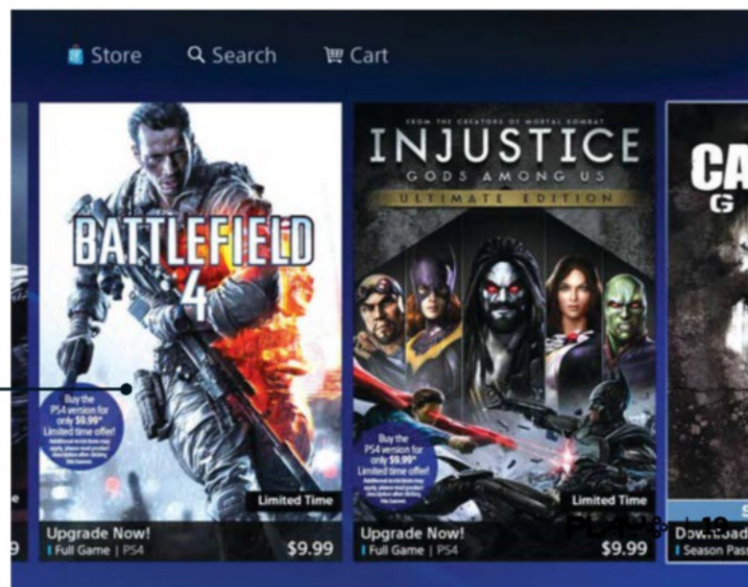
The PS4 is region-free, allowing you to play games from anywhere in the world. Getting those games physically is one thing, buying them digitally from the console directly requires you to have an account for the region that the game is coming from. There are two ways of doing this – through the console, or through Sony's website.

Make sure you choose the region you want to buy games from – probably America or Japan – when creating the account. You'll have to give an address, so we recommend searching a hotel in the relevant country you can use. Yes, it's a bit sneaky, but it works!

The last important thing to note is that, to buy things from the American or Japanese PSN stores, you'll theoretically need a credit or debit card from that region. There is a way around this – using PSN Points cards from the region will allow you to buy things from the store without a credit card. Several online retailers, including Amazon, will email you the code directly rather than sending you the card, saving precious time. Just make sure the points you buy are from the region that the game is from and everything will be fine.



Pressing Right will let you scroll through the games and other products on show in the tab you have open. Several have a 'show more' option to the far right to allow you to see the entirety of the category.



GET THE APP

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Most people seem to have a smartphone or tablet these days, so Sony has released the PlayStation app to complement the PS4 experience. Players will be able to connect their device directly to the PS4 system, managing game downloads and PSN purchases wherever they are. Users can also chat with friends and set challenges, as well as control the PS4 directly using their device to navigate menus. You can check Trophies and edit your profile on the go as well as checking out what's new in the world of PlayStation with news feeds from the PlayStation Blog.

Players can browse the PlayStation Store wherever they like, buying games and queuing them for download on your PS4 at home so, by the time you get back, the games are good to go. Hear about a sale on PSN but are away from home? Just buy the game from your phone and start the download remotely. It's a great feature that is bound to come in handy.

In an era when everyone is spending more time online and on social networks than ever before, being able to access your PlayStation info and identity wherever you are is a great concept. Plus, the app is totally free – always good news.

- 1 Notifications is your one-stop shop for everything that's happening in one place – now on your phone!
- 2 Friends can invite you to join a game and you'll get the invitation on the app, wherever you are.
- 3 Game Alerts lets you know if a friend beats a score, sets a new challenge and so on. It never stops!
- 4 Messages is what it says on the tin – all your PSN messages, now in the palm of your hand.
- 5 One of the best things about the app is being able to browse the PS Store wherever you are.
- 6 Check the status of your friends with a touch, add more and view their profile and Trophies.
- 7 Edit your own profile wherever you are – everything you can do on the PS4, you can do on your phone.
- 8 Everyone knows the most important thing about games are the Trophies... how many have you got?
- 9 The boring but important Settings button: what treasures lie within? Strap on, this could get intense.
- 10 Connect your device to your PS4 to use it as a controller or second screen for certain games.
- 11 This is your link to the broader PlayStation Network – simple but effective.
- 12 Explore gives you a feed of recent PlayStation news, new releases and more.

“JUST BUY THE GAME FROM YOUR PHONE AND START THE DOWNLOAD REMOTELY”



SET UP YOUR ROUTER

Connecting your PS4 via Wi-Fi or Ethernet is extremely easy, but is your router set up to allow the console to work at full capacity? Thought not. The first step is to make sure you're getting the fastest speed out of your connection – if you're on a relatively modest broadband connection then Wi-Fi should be fine but if you're on fibre, you'll likely need to run the PS4 through a wired connection to even get close to your maximum download and (more importantly, if you're planning on streaming) upload speeds.

Next, you'll want to assign your PS4 an IP address on your local network manually, assuming your ISP allows for this. This can be done in the Network options menu – the easiest way is to allow it to assign itself an IP address automatically first, write it down and change the settings manually to be fixed to this address, which we already know works. Run a connection test once you're done just in case.

Now you're on a fixed IP, you'll be able to start port forwarding. This allows the PS4 to communicate with your router more smoothly – changing the UPNP setting to 'On' on the router should allow ports to be altered by the console as required, but you can still do it manually to be on the safe side. Fire up a web browser and navigate to your router's default address (usually 192.168.1.1 – simply look up your router online if that doesn't work). Explore the menus until you find a port forwarding or port mapping option then, after selecting the IP address you assigned to your console, open the following ports:

TCP: 9295

UDP: 9296-9297

If the option to do so isn't available, you may still be able to ease any connection issues by setting the assigned IP to be a DMZ (demilitarised zone, so security is disabled although that shouldn't matter for a console) in the router menus. All things being equal, this should get you on NAT Type 1 and online functionality should be fast and fluid.

BT Home Hub 5

Help | A-Z

Home

Settings

Advanced Settings

Troubleshooting

Wireless

BT Access Control

Port Forwarding

Hub Lights

Broadband

Admin Password

Port Forwarding

Port Forwarding is used by devices (e.g. games consoles) and applications (e.g. servers) to make sure that data coming from the Internet gets to the device that needs to use it. When Port Forwarding is enabled, your Hub will route all inbound traffic for the selected application to the chosen device.

From the list below, first select the application, then the device using the application, then click 'Add' to apply.

If the application you want to use doesn't appear in this list, please go to the Advanced Settings section of your BT Hub Manager, where you'll find more options for Port Forwarding. In the Advanced Settings section, you can also create or change rules for forwarding.

Game or Application:

Device:

Select game or application

Select device

Add

DirectX 7

DirectX 8

DirectX 9

Doom3

Dune 2000

Dungeon Siege

LeDuke.com

“YOU’LL WANT TO ASSIGN YOUR PLAYSTATION 4 AN IP ADDRESS ON YOUR LOCAL NETWORK MANUALLY, ASSUMING YOUR ISP ALLOWS FOR THIS”

CALIBRATE YOUR TV

DIFFICULTY ★★★★★

DISPLAY MODES

Most modern TVs have multiple preset modes, usually including a Game Mode. Mess around with these to get an idea of which offers the best look for your set/room/wishes – each can usually be further customised, though how and how much will differ between sets. Game modes are usually set up to offer minimal input lag, so chances are this'll be your best jumping-off point.



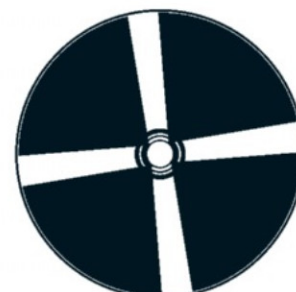
TWEAK THE SLIDERS

Factory defaults will only get you so far, and to get an even better picture, you'll need to fine-tune your settings based on your individual setup. Things like brightness, contrast, sharpness and tint can be easily adjusted from your TV's settings menu, although try to avoid extremes – if you're slipping towards either end of the slider, chances are you've done something wrong.



CALIBRATION DISCS

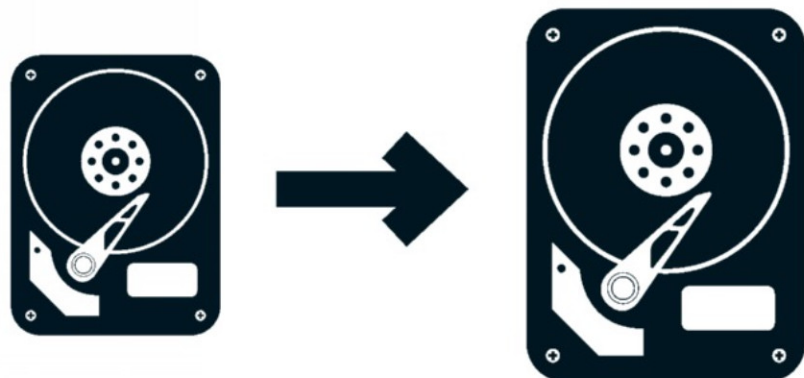
The easiest way to make sure your display is set up properly is to invest in a calibration disc. There are free versions available online, but professional Blu-ray versions are also available – Disney's WOW: World Of Wonder is one of the best out there, not least because it's absolutely idiot-proof. These discs run tests that will get you to tweak individual settings on your TV.



UPGRADE YOUR HARD DRIVE

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

While the stock 500GB drive will be more than enough for most people (especially once you start clearing off install data of games you're not using), the hardcore might want to swap it out for a larger or faster drive. Here's how...



REMOVE THE DEFAULT HDD

2 Unplug the PS4, apply pressure to the inner edge of the glossy top panel and slide it off. Inside is a screw marked with the four PS symbols – remove this and slide out the hard drive cradle. You'll find four screws on the cradle itself. Remove these and the PS4's HDD should come free.



CLOSE IT UP

4 Popping the glossy lid back on is slightly harder than getting it off in the first place – sit it on top so that it's almost in place but slightly off to the left and slide it home, rather than trying to slide it all the way along.



BUY A BETTER HDD

1 Basically, you need a 2.5", 9.5mm hard drive but, beyond that, specs are up to you. If it's pure storage space you're after, you should be able to pick up 2TB drive in early 2014 but if you'd rather have a quicker drive, a hybrid SSHD drive can cut load times significantly.



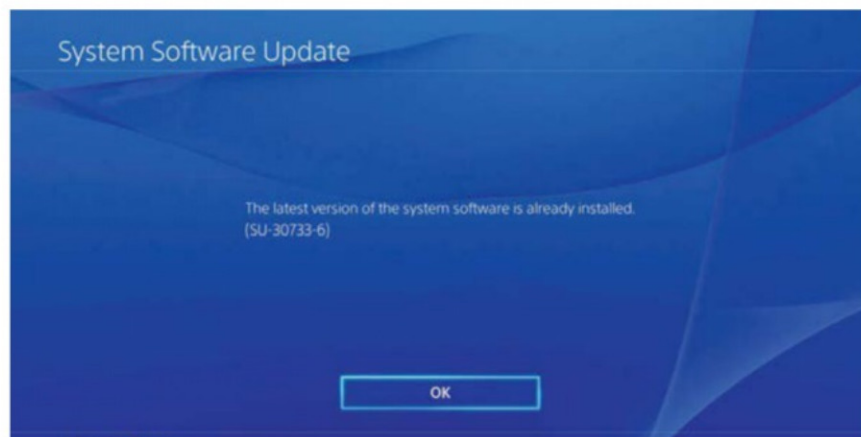
INSTALL THE NEW DRIVE

3 It's basically just the exact same process in reverse to fit your new drive – slot it into the cradle, screw the bad boy into place and slot the whole cradle back into the front of the console. Reattach the special PlayStation screw and your new drive will be safely in place.



INSTALL THE FIRMWARE

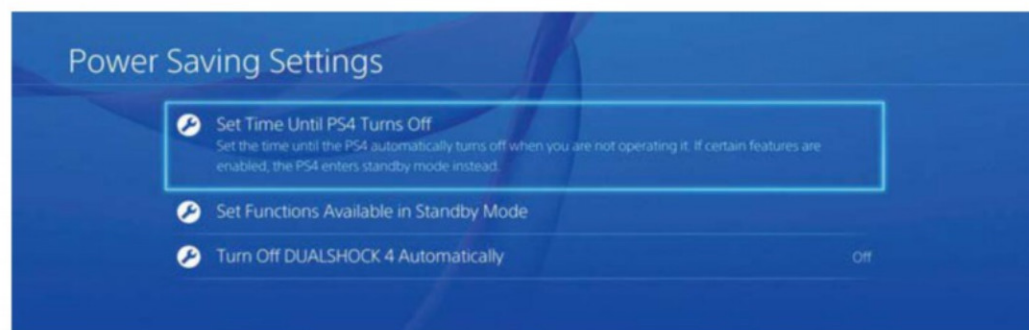
5 Hit the Sony website for the 1.5 recovery firmware (the version that is around 800MB) and stick it on a USB drive, in (E:/PS4/UPDATE/PS4UPDATE.PUP). Reconnect your console, stick the USB in and boot into Safe mode by holding the Power button down for about six seconds.



EXPLORE THE ADVANCED OPTIONS

DIFFICULTY
★★★★★

Fish around in the Settings menu and there are plenty of little tweaks and fixes you can make to optimise your PlayStation 4 experience. Each of the individual menus houses its own secrets – here are a few choice ones to try out...



POWER SAVING SETTINGS / SET FUNCTIONS AVAILABLE IN STANDBY MODE

Putting the PS4 into Standby mode rather than turning it off allows it to boot quicker so that you can get right back to gaming, but there are a few extra things you can set the PS4 to do in its sleep – it can be set to connect to the internet while on Standby (so you can turn it on remotely for Vita Remote Play anywhere) and charge controllers by diverting a little extra power their way.

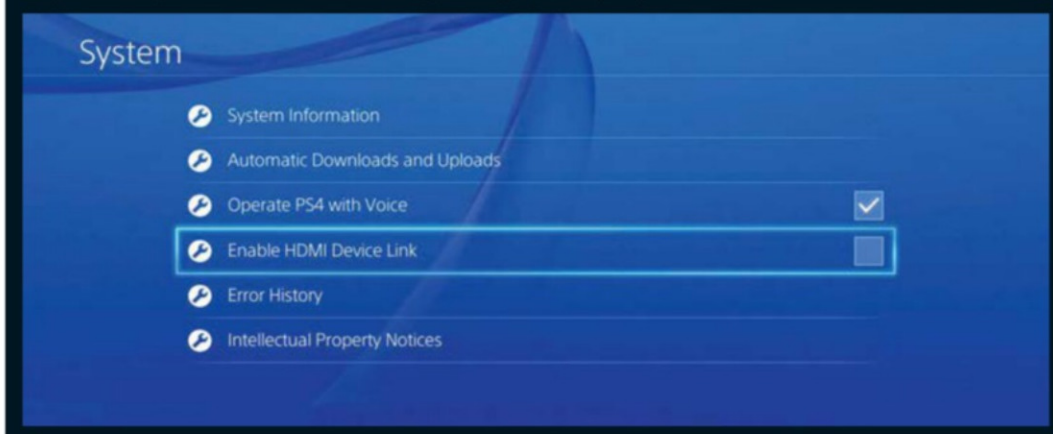


SYSTEM / OPERATE PS4 WITH VOICE

If you've got the camera but don't want to offer any troublemakers in the room the opportunity to mess around and take you back to the Home screen every five seconds, turn off voice control entirely here.

SYSTEM / ENABLE HDMI DEVICE LINK

If you've got a Sony Bravia TV, this option will allow the PS4 to send more than just audio and video via HDMI – it will be able to turn on the TV and jump straight to the correct input as soon as you fire up the PS4. Clever stuff, if you've got the right gear.

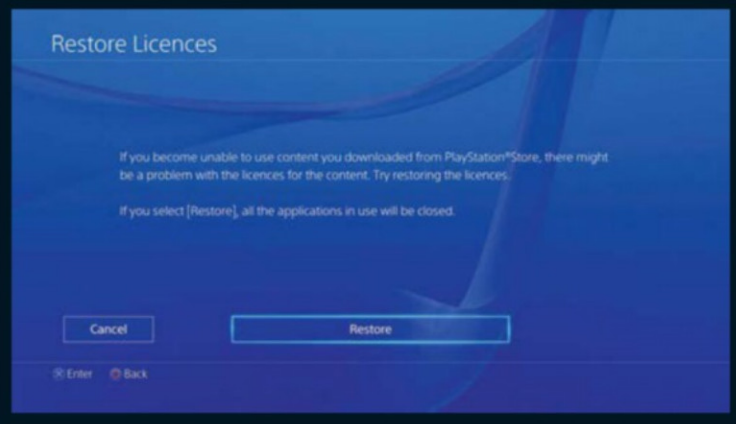


SETTINGS/FACE RECOGNITION

If multiple users have accounts on the same PS4, you can enable this option to let players sign in simply by looking at the camera. Kinda cool, but we're not sure it's more practical than simply picking your name on start-up with a controller. Conversely, if you're the only (or primary) user, you can set your account to log in automatically on start-up, skipping the whole profile selection process altogether.

PSN / RESTORE LICENCES

If you play on multiple machines and end up having any problems with which games your account has a licence to start and play, this option will connect to the web to authorise everything in your history anew. This should grant you immediate access to anything you own, provided it's already downloaded to the console in question.



PS MENU / ADJUST DEVICES

Hold down the PS Button and you'll be taken to a menu from which you can log out, close apps and games or power down the console. But buried in the Adjust Devices sub-menu are a few useful options – Volume Control allows you to fiddle with the DualShock 4's internal speaker volume (perfecting for making *Killzone*'s audio logs stop shouting) but plug a set of headphones into the controller and you'll also unlock the option to output all game audio through your headset. Most useful.



TECHNOLOGY

The Order's weaponry is all tweaked versions of technologies that might have existed at the time, given a bit of imagination. Isabeau's Combo Gun is pretty standard, but Grayson's Arc Gun is like a portable Tesla coil.

BEARD SCANNING

To get the faces realistically dour, an actor has his head scanned and modelled in 3D. Then a stylist comes in to coif the facial hair, which is then used as the base texture for Order members' glorious soup catchers.

ETA Q4 2014 | DEV READY AT DAWN | PUB SONY COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT | TWITTER @RAD_STUDIOS

The Order: 1886

One of the first real looks at the power of the PS4, but is it more than just a pretty face?



WE'RE NOT ONES

to get weepy; stone-cut exemplars of emotional solidity

that we are. But still, it's somewhat sad that as PS4 beams down into our living rooms from the Sony mothership, the games materialising alongside it are – barring *Killzone: Shadow Fall* – just prettier ports of games you could have had a couple of weeks earlier if you'd bought them on PS3. *Need For Speed: Rivals*, *Battlefield 4* and *COD: Ghosts* were all built to straddle the line between this generation and the next. There's nothing *wrong* with these games – there's not one among them that we're not excited by. But if you want a glimpse of what next-gen *really* looks like, you'll have to gaze past the Christmas

PS4 bundles and peer curiously into the mists of 2014.

As a PS4 exclusive, *The Order: 1886* has none of the technical limitations foisted on developers building games for both next and current-gen. Its developer, Ready At Dawn, already has a long history with Sony, having developed *God Of War* and *Daxter* (separately – although what a crossover that would be) for the PSP, theoretically giving the studio the sort of insider access that should make it an expert at eking out the best from the new hardware. Early screenshots and trailers bear this out – the characters and combat in *The Order* are as pretty as any next-gen exclusives we've seen. But if games like *Beyond: Two Souls* have taught us anything of late it's

that, while sharp textures and facial capture can be impressive, next-gen games aren't going to be able to use them to wallpaper over a shonky story. Sony's exclusives on PS3 – be they *Beyond*, *Uncharted* or *The Last Of Us* – put a heavy emphasis on narrative, whatever you may think of their successes in that department. *The Order* has to do the same.

The story takes place in foggy old London Town, in an alternate history in which the Industrial Revolution didn't just produce boring things like housing and railways, but also lightning guns, grenades and bobbing British Zeppelins. At some point in the game's history, the human race split into two separate factions: regular, genetically-untainted people and an army of bestial freaks called 'half-breeds'. For

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

I care. A lot. Looks amazing.
@SurgicalSlinky_

The Order 1886 and Watch Dogs. The Division and MGS V are the only next gen games on my radar at the moment :-)
@Stu_is_art

It looks great, really interested to check out the new IP. Knack looks great but The Order is the better looking new IP
@LiamHangover

Steampunk zombie fights. It's like Sucker Punch without the sexism.
James Archbold

Agree, tis a glorious game.
Zibi Majewski

TRUE HD TEXTURES

The costumes worn by The Order aren't just flat textures. To create the different fabrics, an example is scanned in 3D from multiple angles and then stitched together into a composite. This helps the clothing react realistically to lighting.



PLAY VIDEO

Watch the trailer on our YouTube channel or your free disc, with team commentary.

YouTube www.youtube.com/PlayMagUK



△OX□ The secret Peeping Tom mode that unlocks after completing the game. Maybe.



△OX□ Of the many technologies that have a futuristic boost in *The Order*, air purification is not one of them.



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- △ *The Order* is one of the first exclusively next-gen games coming to PS4.
- The promise of a truly cinematic experience for the player to enjoy.
- × A vast array of crazy sci-fi/historical/nonsensical weaponry for liquidating mutants.
- The design appears to be influenced by everything from *Thief* to *BioShock*.





GUNS, GLORIOUS GUNS

The heat you'll likely be packing in *The Order: 1886*

The Arc Gun, Frag Grenade and Thermite Rifle are just three of the weapons that will eventually be available to The Order in their quest to kill things in amusingly violent ways. Weerasuriya has made a big thing in interviews about keeping the game's technology roughly in line with what was being developed at the time. That leaves plenty of room for steam-powered spike launchers, gas-powered flamethrowers, acid grenades and maybe even trapping a monster in a loom and sewing it to death.



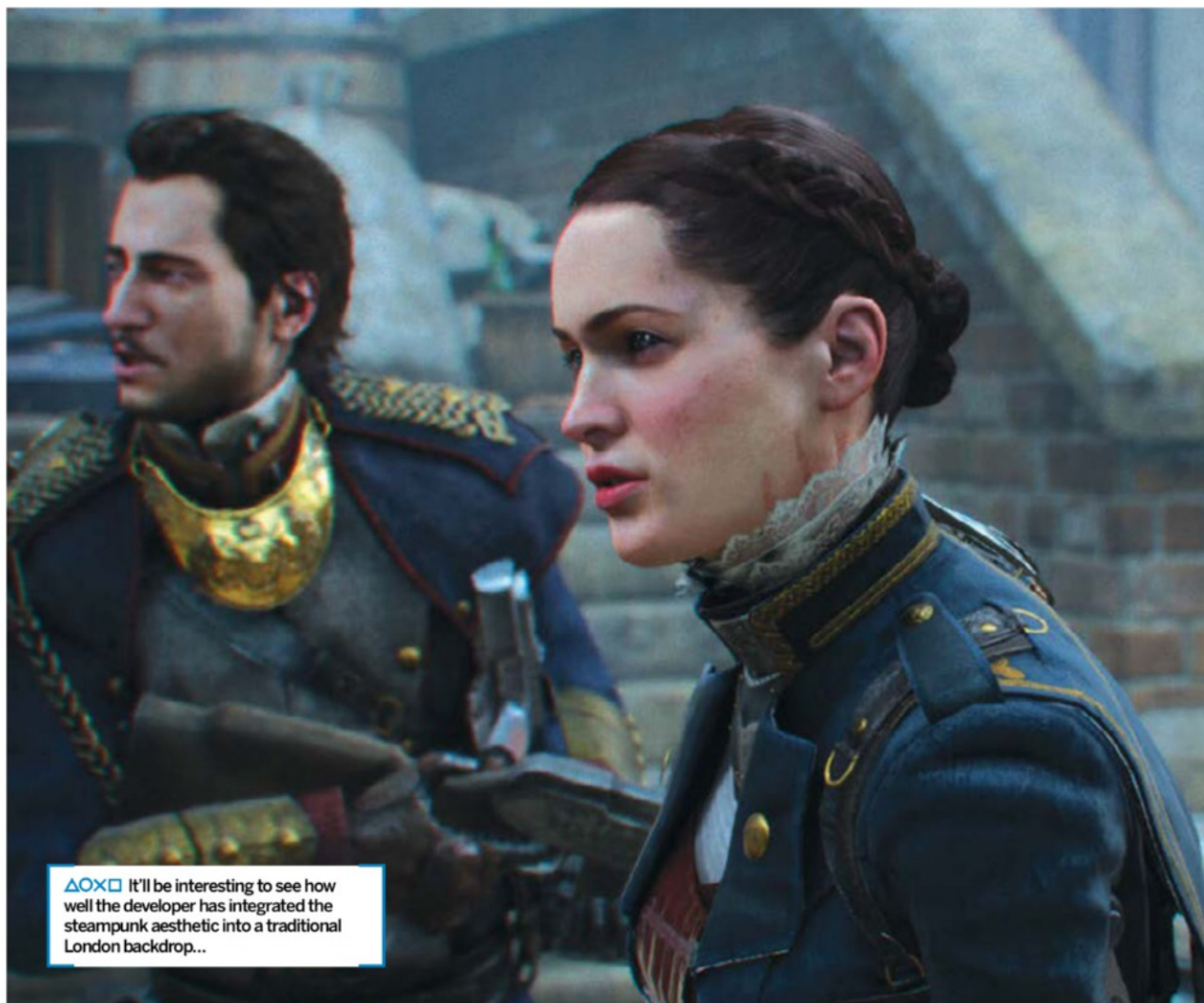
ΔOX□ Frag Grenade



ΔOX□ Thermite Rifle



ΔOX□ Arc Gun



ΔOX□ It'll be interesting to see how well the developer has integrated the steampunk aesthetic into a traditional London backdrop...

years, the half-breeds terrorised regular humans, prompting the establishment of The Order – a group of knights sworn to fight the monsters until they're all dead and everyone can go back to waxing their fabulous Victorian moustaches.

Unfortunately, while the humans initially had the advantage, the half-breeds' mutations take the form of super-speed and strength (and sadly not massive, world-saving tumours). Over the decades, humanity's numbers start to dwindle. Then its scientists make a discovery: a mysterious substance called Black Water that imbues the user with rapid healing abilities and a hugely extended lifespan. Naturally, this breakthrough is reserved for knights of The Order, who now live for hundreds of years.

The current Order that makes up the main cast (or at least what we've seen of it so far) comprises three of these knights and a newbie. Of these, you play as Grayson, also known as Sir Gallahad (in keeping with its knightly traditions, members of The Order get saddled with monikers pinched from the legends of King Arthur's Round Table), one of the longest-serving warriors in The Order. Striding into battle alongside him is Sebastian Malory (Sir Percival, and named for Thomas Malory, the

15th Century author of *The Death Of Arthur*), who becomes a mentor for Grayson, perhaps on account of looking like Jeremy Irons after a visit to Captain Price's barber. He's the oldest living member of The Order, being only the second fighter to take up the mantle of Sir Percival.

Rounding out the knight faction is Isabeau D'Argyll. She started out as Malory's apprentice, with him training her up to take on the mantle of Lady Igraine. As she advances in The Order, she and Malory reportedly become friends and then more-than-friends, although tragically theirs is a forbidden love, as nipping off for a cheeky fumble – even a grim-faced Victorian one in full plate-mail – is frowned upon while mutants are clawing people to bits in the streets.

The final addition to the squad is the Marquis de Lafayette, a real-life figure plucked from history and brought into The Order as an initiate. Lafayette was the commander of France's national guard during the French Revolution, and later a general in Washington's army during the American Revolutionary War. In *The Order* he's brought on board as a tactician to help plan the war against the half-breeds.

This sort of historical revisionism is key to a lot of *The Order's* story and gameplay. In this



alternate timeline, certain technologies have had unlikely shunts forward in their development and been embraced by The Order as means to fight against the mutants. Now, The Order protects the masses with all kinds of jerry-rigged, retro-futuristic boomsticks.

The Arc Gun, for example, does exactly what you think it might. After a few seconds of holding down the trigger to charge, it spits out a burst of jagged lightning – good for sniping targets at range or frazzling armoured enemies that get too close. Then there's the Combo Gun, which packs a wallop to knock enemies back before you hose them down with decidedly non-non-lethal bullets.

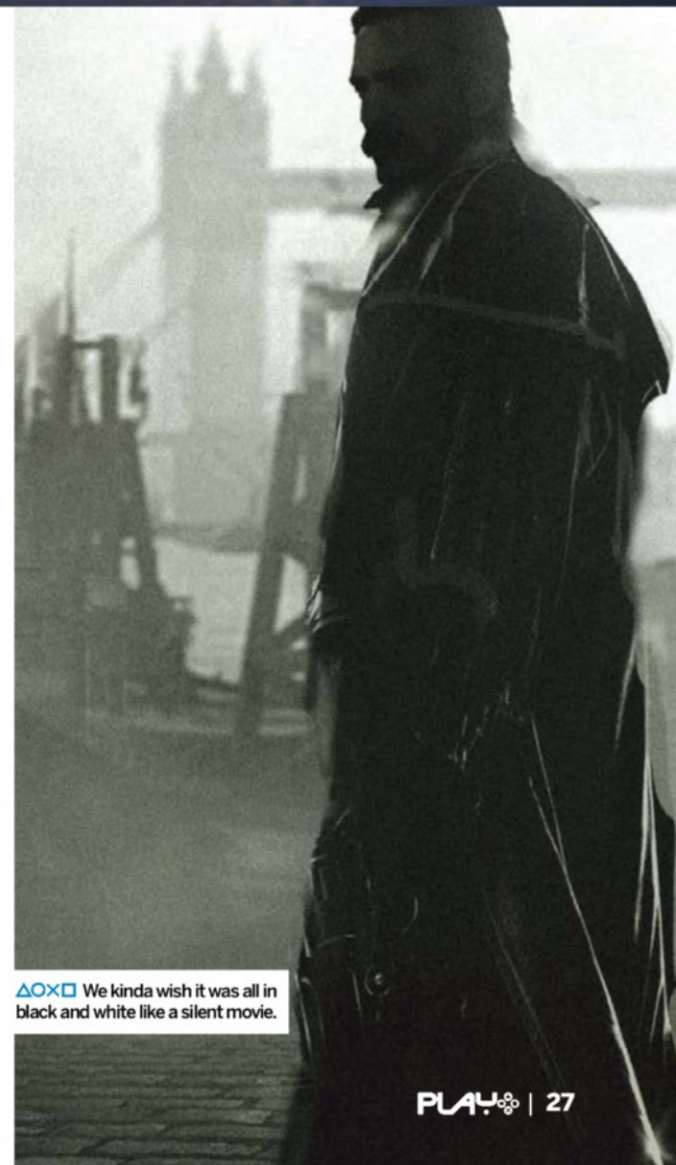
Most grisly of all is the Thermite Rifle. The first shot fires out a cartridge of metal shards and oxidising agent, which bursts apart on impact into a small cloud that spreads through the environment and chokes enemies. The second shot ignites the cloud, burning anything caught in the blast. You can fire off multiple rounds before igniting them, creating an inferno that incinerates multiple foes at once.

It isn't just The Order's armoury that's been given the Jules Verne treatment. In battle, members of The Order can communicate with each other via radio headsets – like in every

military shooter you've ever played, but clunkier and probably made from oak. Not only that, but they can also call in air support in the form of a friendly airship – although whether its purpose is just spotting targets or raining down hellfire we don't know. It's all very *BioShock*; bending bits of history until game mechanics like radios fit into the narrative without too hefty an eyebrow raise. Then again, if you're going to take inspiration (read: crib) from anywhere, *BioShock*'s as good a source as any on PS3.

But *The Order* isn't all just about blasting mutants in the name of protecting genetically pure humans. Sometimes you'll have to blast those humans as well. While the primary focus of *The Order* is protecting citizens from the half-breeds, all is not well on the streets of London Town; with a restive underclass getting all uppity about the rich and powerful living large, while their children subsist on a diet of smog.

This means that you'll be dividing your attentions between saving people from monsters and then helping the city's police force clobber them into line. We don't know how these protests will play out or whether the mob has leaders, but hopefully this is an area that the game's writers – creative director Ru Weerasuriya and Kirk Ellis,



△×□ We kinda wish it was all in black and white like a silent movie.

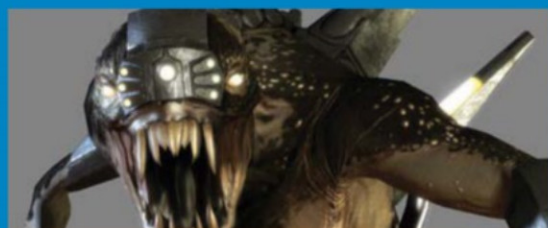
CREATING THE MUTANT

Unravel The Order's DNA and you will find...



DISHONORED

Steampunk weapons? Check. Political tensions? Check. An indifferent ruling class shoring themselves up against a mutant plague while we sort things with extreme violence? Triple check.



RESISTANCE

A science fiction game complete with an array of exotic weapons with dual-firing modes being used to melt/burn/zap slaving mutated humans? Welcome back, Sergeant Hale...



BIOSHOCK

We've got no trouble shooting up a crazed underclass so long as everyone's angry with a corrupt elite. Hopefully by the time *The Order* launches, *Infinite* won't feel quite so fresh in the mind.



BORDERLANDS

The Order might not go the co-op route (it's not a staple of Sony games) but the squad make-up definitely evokes the Vault Hunters. With multiple factions, multiplayer seems a likely addition, too.

who won an Emmy for HBO miniseries *John Adams* – will explore, rather than relegating the masses to another token enemy type.

That concludes what we know about *The Order's* story – with a release date set for sometime in 2014, there's plenty more to be revealed as the months creep by. However, as a PS4 exclusive, you can bet that Ready At Dawn has been pushing its next-gen technologies as hard as the story in its publicity materials. So, let's put on our thick spectacles and talk polygons.

According to Weerasuriya, the graphics you've seen in *The Order's* trailer aren't pre-rendered, whatever the crowing cynics may say. It's not gameplay, but the E3 trailer depicting a battle between The Order and the half-breeds was rendered entirely in-engine. And it's pretty. The first time we see reflections on the glass of The Order's carriage is an eye-popping moment. Also impressive is the fog: as the knights fan out around their carriage, monsters lurk in the murky grey of the middle-distance. It's gloomy – this generation's predication for greys and browns is alive and well in *The Order* – but in a beautiful way, like Kate Moss jumping up and down in a dirty puddle.

But the visual wizardry reportedly extends further than making pretty things catch fire. Speaking to Game Informer, Weerasuriya said that after watching years of TV and film, the way games portray themselves has become too clean and clinical. Ready At Dawn has put a lot of effort into replicating film's imperfections – lens flare, dust, the curvature of the lens' edge – in the name of immersion. Whatever you think of that focus artistically (it does sound a little pretentious), it does at least show a dedication to presentation.

Beyond the aesthetics, the world is also reportedly less rigid than gamers will be used to.



Objects in it have been modelled to bend before they break – wood splinters, metal buckles and walls come tumbling down. We've not seen the destruction physics yet, but if this soft-modelling extends to every object in the game then it could be leveraged to give the player a tactical edge – knocking down supports or opening new pathways through walls. Again, we're not saying you *can* do those things – but the implications for the technology are intriguing if it works well.

We also don't know anything concrete about *The Order's* rumoured multiplayer mode, although if we were betting men – which we haven't been since nearly losing **Play** in a game of high stakes Baccarat – we'd be cautiously stacking our chips on it being there in some form in the final game. *The Order's* four-person team already has the same three-dudes-one-gal setup as *Borderlands*, and as a Sony exclusive, we'd be surprised if *The Order* went single-player only while *The Last Of Us* and *Beyond: Two Souls* both had multiplayer or co-op included. As a next-gen exclusive, it's also

in a position to show off the PS4's social features. Passing on multiplayer doesn't make sense.

It's far, far too early to come to a fixed conclusion about *The Order: 1886*. A lot can happen in a year, and Ready At Dawn is being (not unreasonably) cagey about the game's themes and story for the moment. That said, to date there's nothing beyond those very flimsy-sounding 'filmic' elements that we've not seen before in other games of the past 12 months. The four-player squad combat looks like a Dickensian *Borderlands*, the not-quite-London setting sounds like *Dishonored's* Dunwall and the political unrest subplot (along with the alternate-timeline gadgetry) sounds like *BioShock*. They say that good artists borrow while great artists steal, but with so many titles launching for the PS4 next year, we'd like to see more of the narrative and the interplay between different members of The Order before we get excited. There's no point boasting an Emmy Award-winning writer and then talking to us about lens curvature.



△OX□ Ready At Dawn's is a grim, greyscale vision of London. It's pretty accurate.



On that subject, that 'filmic' focus is troubling in itself. The assertion that gamers are going to be more invested or more immersed in a game because the developers have spent weeks or months modelling dust that realistically settles on the camera smacks of the David Cage school of videogame design, where cutting-edge technology and realism gets muddled up with meaningful storytelling. That might be hugely unfair – *The Order: 1886* could turn out to be the greatest story ever committed to Blu-ray – but if *The Order* aims to be truly 'filmic', it's worth noting that directors of Hollywood blockbusters don't often talk about what amazing cameras they shot their movie on.

For now, we're still content to just gawp at *The Order*'s screenshots and footage. As a demonstration of what developers can achieve visually when the PS4 has only just been released, it's undeniably impressive. But beyond its aesthetics, the game right now just isn't selling itself very well. Show us more original weapons, interesting characters and a good story. Trying to sell a new game on its graphics is just so PS3.

Richard Wordsworth

THE ORDER: 1886 is being developed by Ready At Dawn. Check the website for more details:
www.readyatdawn.com



△OX□ Historically, Victorian ladies couldn't resist a gentleman with a neatly trimmed moustache.

△×□ Big Boss may be starting to look his age, but he's still a badass.

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

f Can't wait to be Honest. Most Fav franchise of all Games and can't wait to see MGSV The Phantom Pain on PS4
Teri Redding

f Can not wait the legendary snake is back. The trailers for the game just intensified my love for the game alot more.
Michael Jordan

f Foaming at the mouth for it but also still very annoyed that it's not David Hayter voicing snake.
Tom Highton

t This game will b- HURGHIIHHH FOXDIE!!
@BryonRollins

t just another drawn out bunch of weird cut scenes that make NO sense with better in game graphics.... Not sold on it yet
@G4MERGOD

t can't wait, my most anticipated game by a mile
@alphamantaur

ETA Q2 2014 | DEV KOJIMA PRODUCTIONS | PUB KONAMI | TWITTER @HIDEO_KOJIMA_EU

Metal Gear Solid V: Ground Zeroes

Rage against the nanomachines



THE MYSTERY IS finally over. Sure, we all knew *The Phantom Pain* was *Metal Gear Solid V*, but now we know exactly how the previously-announced *Ground Zeroes* fits into the picture. Acting as a standalone prequel, *Ground Zeroes* will set the scene and get players ready for what will be the meat of the story in *The Phantom Pain*.

The two games bridge main character Big Boss's time in a coma – *Ground Zeroes* details how he comes to fall into it, while *The Phantom Pain* deals with the vastly changed world he wakes up to years later. It's an interesting choice to release the two separately, but Hideo Kojima has always been known for doing things a little differently.

Kojima's reasoning for splitting his next game into two is to ease people into a

drastically different take on MGS. "There will be a significant difference in what *The Phantom Pain* brings to the series," Kojima is quoted as saying, "so we want to ease players into the new open-world environment and its potential."

Cynics might see *Ground Zeroes* as little more than an attempt to cash in on excitement, getting eager gamers to pay for what may amount to little more than a demo. A price of £19.99 on current-gen and £29.99 on PlayStation 4 isn't easing matters, with several concerned that it's too high a price for what is expected to be a short experience.

Of course, a lot of this is simple speculation. We have no idea how long *Ground Zeroes* will be, and from the sounds of it the game will offer at least a few solid hours. The game apparently has a full day and night cycle that runs in real-time, as well as allowing players to tackle



PLAY VIDEO

Watch the trailer on our YouTube channel or your free disc, with team commentary.

YouTube www.youtube.com/PlayMagUK



△×□ Camp Omega, *Ground Zeroes*' main focal point.

PRIOR FORM

Metal Gear Solid HD Collection Play one of the best *Metal Gear Solid* games (3), one of the weirdest (2) and the excellent *Peace Walker*, all now remade in shiny HD resolutions.



△○× True to form, expect to be sneaking more than fighting.



△○× It looks like Skull Face will be *Ground Zeroes*' primary antagonist.

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- ▲ It's the long-awaited return of *Metal Gear Solid*. We honestly can't wait.
- It offers a taster of what's to come in *The Phantom Pain*.
- × A new, unrestricted open-world approach to classic stealth.
- Play through the missions in the order you choose.



missions in the order they choose, rather than running through them in a linear gauntlet. It certainly sounds more like a full-featured title rather than a brief demo.

Taking place a few years after *Peace Walker*, *Ground Zeroes* will once again star Big Boss, commonly referred to as Snake, as he works with his mercenary army *Militaires Sans Frontieres* to infiltrate an American black site in Cuba called Camp Omega. His mission includes rescuing ally Chico as well as tracking down Cipher agent Paz – yeah, it's a pretty complicated story. From existing trailers we've seen Snake's base under attack from the mysterious XOF organization and their apparent leader, a

man with a heavily scarred face referred to as 'Skull Face'. Good to see Kojima's lack of subtlety is as strong as ever.

Ground Zeroes also looks set to take a lot of inspiration from the excellent *Peace Walker*. Base-building will return, allowing players to develop weapons and items from their motherbase as they spend time in the field. It also carries the same *Tactical Espionage Operations* tagline, different from the *Tactical Espionage Action* that graced every game before *Peace Walker*.

Running on Konami's new FOX engine, *MGSV* is one of the most beautiful PS4 games we've seen to date. Like several other games right now, it will also be coming to current-gen, but it seems clear

that the next-gen edition offers the true *MGSV* experience.

Considering people bought *Zone Of The Enders* back in the day just to play the *Metal Gear Solid 2* demo, perhaps it's not surprising that Konami is taking this approach. From the sounds of it, *Ground Zeroes* will offer more gameplay than a demo, as well as being crucial from a story standpoint. The wait for more *Metal Gear* has been so long that the opportunity to get a little taster is greatly appreciated.

Sam Smith

METAL GEAR SOLID V is being developed by Kojima Productions. Check the website for more details: www.konami.jp/mgs5/en

EXTREME CLOSE-UP Attention to detail, Kojima style



SNAKE

Big Boss is a master of close-quarters combat, as demonstrated here.



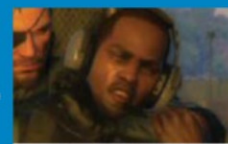
ZZZ

Pacifists can still put their enemies to sleep rather than murder them.



SCENERY

See that world out there? All that stuff is open to explore for the first time.



OTHER DUDE

It's easy to see the graphical improvements from *MGS4* to this game...

ETA 2014 | DEV UBISOFT MONTREAL | PUB UBISOFT | TWITTER @WATCHDOGSGAME

Watch Dogs

Two months wasn't long enough in Los Santos after all, eh Ubisoft?



ALSO COMING TO PS3

IS IT IRONIC that *Watch Dogs*, a title that's so entirely focussed on surveillance, should suddenly disappear off of the industry radar without warning? Perhaps it is – we haven't really been confident in irony identification since Alanis Morissette ruined it for everyone. But we digress. As you may recall, *Watch Dogs* was supposed to be a PS4 launch title. Hell, it was supposed to be *the* PS4 launch title. And while we're loving shooting up the lush lands of Vekta as much as the next gamer with an itchy trigger finger, we were looking forward to unleashing some digital chaos upon the streets of Chicago with nothing but a smartphone in one hand and a Beretta in the other.

"Play. I slept with my *Watch Dogs* pre-order receipt under my pillow after your recommendations. On cold nights, I whispered my deepest desires into its paper ears and it listened. So, what up?" you may rightfully ask, but believe us when we say we are just surprised as you. We live in an age where every piece of gaming news is leaked early, the 24-hour news cycle relentless in its destruction of all that is embargoed and holy. But this is the situation we are in. *Watch Dogs* has been abruptly delayed until 2014, the PS4 bundles have been put on hold and we're left with a gap in our launch line-up. But put down that pitchfork and cancel that trip to Montreal – perhaps this delay is for the best.

If there's one thing no publisher should ever do, it's go into a release window in direct competition with itself. *Watch Dogs* had enough problems escaping the shadow of *Assassin's Creed* as it is, and with that particular series finally getting back on track with *Black Flag*, Ubisoft risked cannibalising its own sales – not a good tactic during the transition to a new console, let alone with a new IP. Then again, Ubi has been touting *Watch Dogs* for close to two years and that has never come into consideration before, so where do we point the finger? The obvious place is towards the filthy, fun-loving streets of San Andreas. It was as early as September when Ubisoft began to rib the titan – "two months are enough

to visit Los Santos... come to Chicago November 21" an official poster joked. Is there a chance that Ubisoft didn't quite anticipate that *Grand Theft Auto V* would decimate all records by earning \$1 billion within three days? Not freaking likely.

Sadly, it's got to come down to quality then. There's no way Ubisoft didn't plan for the success of *GTA* – the marketing says as much – so we have no choice but to let you into a little industry secret: we've had surprisingly little access to *Watch Dogs*. Hands-on opportunities have been incredibly limited, and that's a worrying sign. Outside of trade shows, Ubi has been reluctant to let us run amok in its open-world hack-'em-up and, while we've



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



Watch Dogs is ready to unleash us upon the very real streets of Chicago.



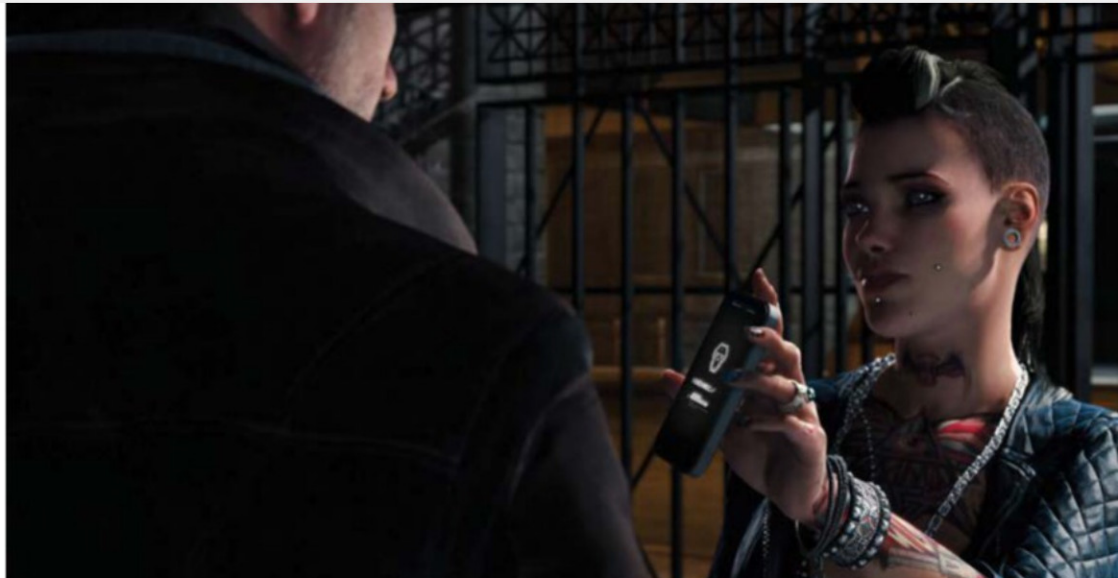
We get to maim and kill by literally turning the city into mankind's greatest weapon.



Want to ruin someone's day? Multiplayer works like *Dark Souls*; just drop in.



It might be delayed, but that doesn't stop it looking any less gorgeous.



been impressed with what we have seen and played, we did wonder if it had a bit of *Assassin's Creed* syndrome. As much as we appreciated Altaïr's exploits through Third Crusade-era Europe, there's no escaping the fact that it was a wonderful concept restricted by lazy game mechanics and half-arsed ideas. If we had to sit on one more bench to listen out for intel we were going to go feral and, looking at the way Aiden Pierce was stuck hacking into cameras to find his next objective, maybe *Watch Dogs* was caught in the same rut. Is yet another great game concept restricted by ambition and mechanics?

The next six months or so are going to be integral. Ubisoft is saying it needs the extra time to "polish and fine tune each detail so [*Watch Dogs*]

can deliver a truly memorable and exceptional experience." Honestly, we are happy to give it to Ubisoft Montreal if it means *Watch Dogs* comes out the other side a better product. The shooting, driving and hacking mechanics seem to work well enough in isolation, but we need assurances that they work in the grand scheme of things – the story mode of *Watch Dogs* needs to be flaunted to the public in favour of the multiplayer, and soon.

Releasing in 2014 does present its fair share of new challenges. While it'll likely be enough time that we tire of *GTA* and hunger for a new open world to explore, it'll have decidedly next-gen games like *The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt* and *inFamous: Second Son* as competition. We are confident that

if Ubisoft is able to fine-tune the story and bring about a cohesive experience then the delay should only benefit *Watch Dogs*. We're sad we won't be playing it this Christmas, but this is a brave move for Ubisoft; one that we appreciate considering the difficulty in launching new franchises. Whether we are playing it in winter or spring, we can't wait to get deep into the streets of Chicago, create some futuristic carnage and watch the system fail at the press of a button.

Josh West

WATCH DOGS is undergoing on-going maintenance by Ubisoft Montreal. Keep an eye on **WATCHDOGS.UBI.COM** for any new developments.



SECOND SCREEN

Enjoy an Aiden-style gadget of your own

CTOS

The CTOS app lets players direct police, request helicopter support, raise bridges and stop traffic in an attempt to slow Aiden down.

JERK

Aiden Pierce. What a jerk, are we right? He's causing havoc all across Chicago with his gadgetry, and who has the power to stop him?

CONTROL

You can, it seems, with a handy companion app. It allows a mobile player to take on the role of the police force.

DIFFICULT

The more Aiden resists your advances, the more attacks you'll unlock. That'll learn your buddy for being needlessly reckless.



△×□ Considering it was a month away at time of writing, we still know scarily little about Aiden Pierce and his mission. Hopefully Ubi will tell all soon...

ETA 2014 | DEV NAMCO BANDAI | PUB NAMCO BANDAI | TWITTER @TALESOFU

Tales Of Xillia 2

Say goodbye to another 60 hours...



TALES OF XILLIA only came out a few months ago, but the sequel was announced for the West mere weeks after it launched. This isn't some rush job though, as the huge time delay between Japanese and Western launches meant that *Xillia 2* was actually out in Japan long before we even got the first game.

Taking place a year after the end of the first game, *Xillia 2* follows a new main character, and knowledge of the original story isn't required to enjoy this one. That said, several returning characters will make an appearance and it's obvious that this is a game truly meant for existing fans.

Ludger Will Kresnik is our new hero (we know it's a stupid name – it's a JRPG). Taking cues from classic examples of the genre, Ludger is a silent protagonist, leaving his personality largely up to the player.

So far, so standard, but the setup to *Tales Of Xillia 2* is interestingly realistic. There is no huge magical cataclysm or mysterious destiny: rather, Ludger is saved from a train crash by the organized crime syndicate Clanspia Inc. They treat his injuries but charge Ludger for the courtesy, burdening him with a huge debt he best repay if he wants to stay healthy.

Being indebted to the mob sounds more *GTA* than *Final Fantasy*, but fear not, the fantastical elements

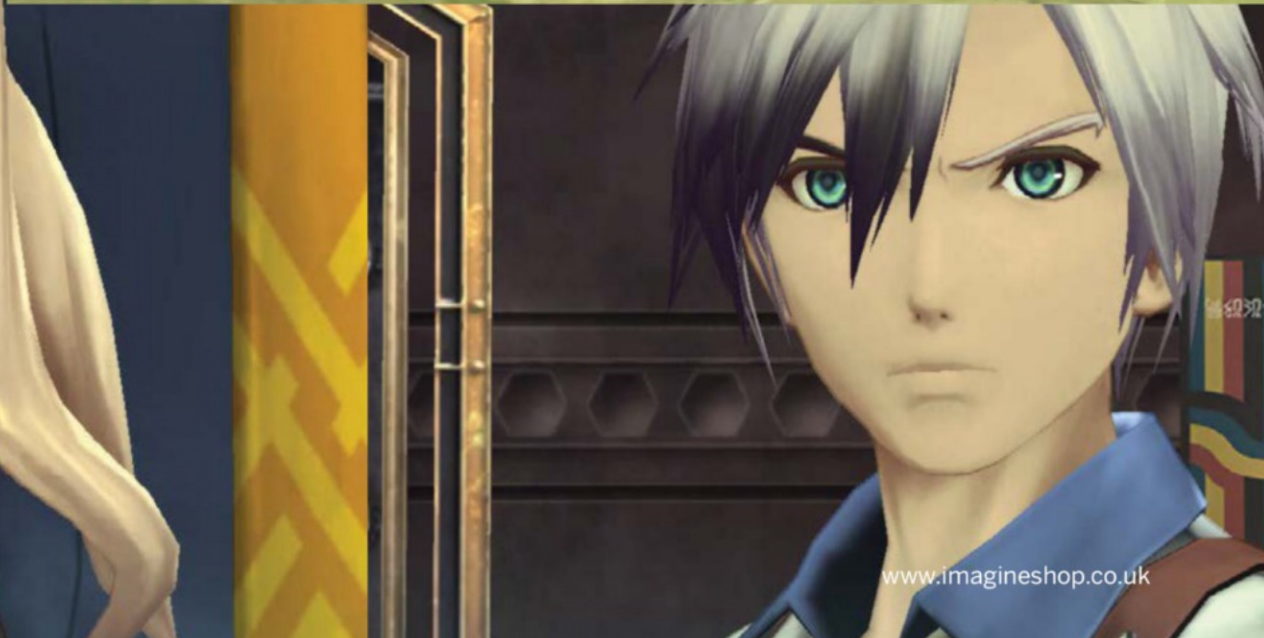
the genre is known for quickly appear. Turns out Ludger, as a member of the Kresnik bloodline, has the ability to enter and destroy alternate timelines. Clanspia forces him to use these powers as a way to pay off his debt as the game begins. The story explores themes of choice as Ludger explores these alternate worlds, and the player is given more input than usual in a *Tales* game as to how the story develops. Whether that means multiple endings and choices with real repercussions or just lots of yes/no questions remains to be seen.

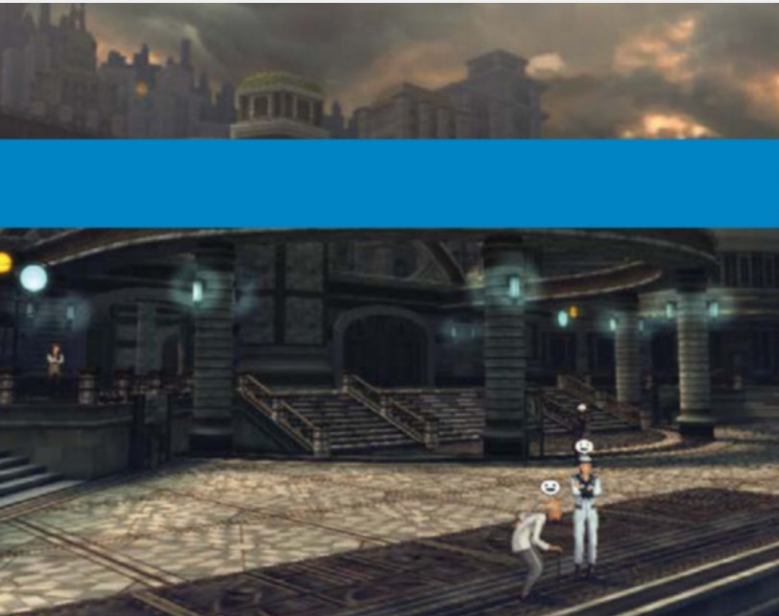
The story might be all-new, but gameplay-wise this seems to be a similar beast to its predecessor.

Ludger and company traverse a fully 3D world map, with the same controllable camera that *Xillia* introduced for the first time.

The *Tales* series is most known for its fast-paced combat systems, a welcome change of pace for those tired of the traditional turn-based approach. Titled the 'Cross Dual Raid Linear Motion Battle System' (say that five times), up to four party members face off against groups of foes in real-time combat. Ludger can switch between three weapons: dual blades, dual pistols and a *sledgehammer*, changing his fighting style and abilities on the fly.

△×□ Battles have always been the best bit of *Tales* games, with more in common with action games than their RPG brethren.





While most battles can be passed via the mashing of buttons, the battle system holds surprising depth. Physical attack combinations are performed with one button and magic attacks another, with the direction pressed changing the moves used. Performing any attack uses up AC points, while using magic costs TP, both of which recharge with time. Carefully maintaining the flow of battle to ensure a steady stream of points to use is the key to mastery. Characters can also be linked up to buff each other and perform unified attacks – special moves that tend to kill whatever they hit.

This will no doubt sound very familiar to fans of the first *Xillia* but that's kind of the point. More of the same will go a long way if the initial outing was popular, and as recent *Final Fantasy* games have shown, too much change isn't always a good idea. We've no idea of a specific release date aside from 2014, but we'd wager it can't be too far off. Gamers with save files from *Tales Of Graces f* or the first *Xillia* will be able to unlock extra goodies, so you've got plenty of time to go back and finish those first.

Sam Smith

TALES OF XILLIA 2 is being developed by Namco Bandai. Check the website for more details:
www.uk.namcobandaigames.eu

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

f Here are my thoughts: "How on earth do I pronounce Xillia?!"

Ian Dickson

f Want it...Want it now.
Geraint Gerbear

Rees

t if it's as good as the first they can have my money!!

@LiamHangover

t I've not even played tales of xillia 1 yet, still haven't finished tales of the abyss >.<

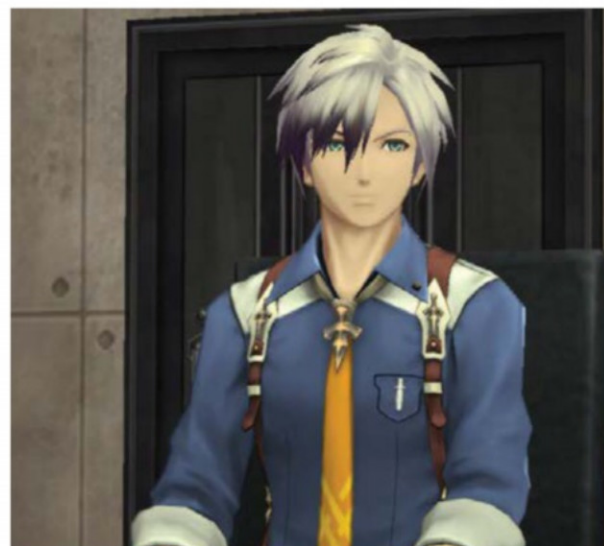
@snottob

t Loved and scored the Platinum on the first game so grabbing this will be a must. Also curious about the debt mechanic.

@ThePigMarcher



△×□ Each enemy will have weaknesses to specific weapons and elements, and taking advantage can rack up huge combos.



WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



Follows on from the surprisingly enjoyable *Tales Of Xillia*.



The fast, real-time battles that the series is known for.



Switch weapons in battle to change fighting style instantly.



There's life in the old PlayStation 3 yet. Don't bin it! Like you were going to...

“A truly innovative, socially connected racing game, but the team requires more time in order to deliver on their vision.” **Sony Worldwide Studios** on the delay. Just make it really good...

△×□ Although racing against ghosts is a good test of skill, there's nothing like overtaking the opposition in person.

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?

- △ Evolution wants to make a racing game that's all about the supercars.
- Some may prefer the lone wolf approach but teams are a big part of motorsport.
- × *DriveClub* will hopefully run at a beautiful 60fps after this scheduled pit-stop.
- PS Plus subscribers will get a condensed *DriveClub* for free when it launches.



SHARE THIS



APEX TWIN TURBO

The need for speed control

Nailing the corner with the perfect entry speed, turning angle and throttle control is never easy, but when you finally start to understand the composition of a track and the capabilities of your chosen vehicle, there's nothing like firing through your favourite corner at the very edge of controllable traction. And if that adds up to a faster lap time than all your friends, it's all the better for it. Hit that Share button and let them know...

△×□ As far as camera angles go, this one is a tad restrictive. It's good for reading number plates though.



ETA Q1 2014 | DEV EVOLUTION STUDIOS

PUB SONY | TWITTER @DRIVECLUB

DriveClub

Evolution applies the brakes just before the finish line

△×□ It'll be interesting to see if *DriveClub* can top *Gran Turismo 6* in the looks department. It's a tall order.



WHEN IT COMES to gaming, there's little worse than playing a decidedly average game that you know could've been so much better. It might be an overall lack of polish or a specific game mechanic that was underdeveloped. But whatever the case may be, a studio needs enough time to fine tune the concept and iron out the kinks. This is the position that Evolution Studios, the developer of *DriveClub*, finds itself in at the moment, as after missing the PlayStation 4 launch window it's now aiming for release early next year.

This means that for the first time since PS2, a Sony console is launching without a first-party racing game in its starting line-up. As detrimental as this may seem, it's reassuring to know that Evolution wants to go the extra mile rather than just covering a base with something that could potentially be dull and forgettable. But by the same stretch, the studio needs to make sure that it doesn't get stuck in a turbulent and protracted development cycle.

When we last played *DriveClub* at this year's Eurogamer Expo, it was clear that the targeted 60fps was still wide of the mark. This is something that could set the game apart from a lot of the current-gen competition, so it's imperative that Evolution comes good on its promise. The fact that the game will now be surfacing after the release of

Gran Turismo 6 – not to mention Microsoft's *Forza Motorsport 5* – means that racing fans will have higher expectations once *DriveClub* finally breaks free from development. But the reward for patience needs to be more weighted than a Mercedes with a custom paint job.

What Evolution hopes to achieve with this extra time isn't entirely certain but it could have something to do with the game's community focus. So far we've seen the Fame system that lets you accumulate points for your team as well as the Overdrive and Face-Off challenges that let you compete with other teams. These challenges could be the quickest time through a specific part of the track or the longest unbroken drift with a Pagani Huayra. But what we haven't seen is how the game will handle once two or more cars hit the circuit.

It's safe to assume that you won't be able to shear a McLaren 12C Spider in half by bashing it into a wall. The driving physics rest somewhere between a sim-style racer like *Gran Turismo* and a more arcade-centric racing game like *Need For Speed* or *Grid*. You can't even leave the established boundaries as *DriveClub* is all track and no field. But by focussing the game on the 'super' part of the automotive spectrum, it seems that Evolution is aiming to master one racing discipline rather than spreading itself too thinly and failing to impress anyone.

Whether or not this combination of supercars and racing teams turns out to be a winning formula remains to be seen, but given Evolution's experience with *MotorStorm* and *WRC*, this game is far from being a wildcard debut by a rookie driver. The team clearly has a specific racing experience in mind, and if it takes a little longer to make it a reality – complete with a graphical presentation that compliments the already accomplished racing model – then waiting a few more months is preferable to missing out on something that should feel more finished.

It's not a case of slow and steady wins the race – we all know that's complete bollocks. It's more a case of letting the mechanics complete all the modifications before hitting the ignition button. At first, we wanted a competent racing game that showcased the PlayStation 4's improved rendering capabilities. But now that Evolution has scrapped the schedule so it can spend longer on the final adjustments, we expect something more polished and ambitious. In the end, the game's ultimate success will be determined by how much *DriveClub* compels us to race as a team.

Matt Edwards

DRIVECLUB is being assembled by Evolution Studios. Head on over to the website for more details: UK.PLAYSTATION.COM/DRIVECLUB

ANATOMY OF...

YOU
(IN ROGUE LEGACY)

Indie games are the new big thing, and few are bigger than Rogue Legacy – a hybrid of platformer and dungeon-crawler that has you taking control of members of your own lineage...

A CLASS OF THEIR OWN

Characters also have one of over eight classes including knight, sellsword and ninja, although these are again randomly selected. Each plays differently, with different abilities and combat powers available. All the variables add up to ensure you are almost guaranteed to never play the same character twice.

GENETIC DEFECTS

New characters have genetic traits that can be good or bad, like colour-blindness turning the screen black and white for the length of that character's life. Some can even have Irritable Bowel Syndrome, which has understandably messy results. Seriously, there is a lot that can go wrong with each character.

EXTENDED FAMILY

Rogue Legacy is tough and you will die. When you do, all your gold is carried over and passed to one of your character's heirs. These are randomly generated, although players get a choice of one of three children to avenge their parent. Players can spend their gold on weapons and armour before starting each new life.

THE WORLD KEEPS CHANGING

With each new character, the castle gets procedurally generated, ensuring a new experience every time. You might get stronger as you gather gold and buy better stuff, but memorising the layout of the dungeon you must conquer is impossible. The thrill of uncovering a new, uncharted lair never gets old.

ETA 2014 | DEV CELLAR DOOR GAMES | PUB CELLAR DOOR GAMES | TWITTER @CELLARDOORGAMES

Rogue Legacy



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ACTIVITY LED

ON / OFF SWITCH

BLUETOOTH PAIR

IN-BUILT MICROPHONE



IN-BUILT SPEAKER

POWER LED

ACTIVITY LED

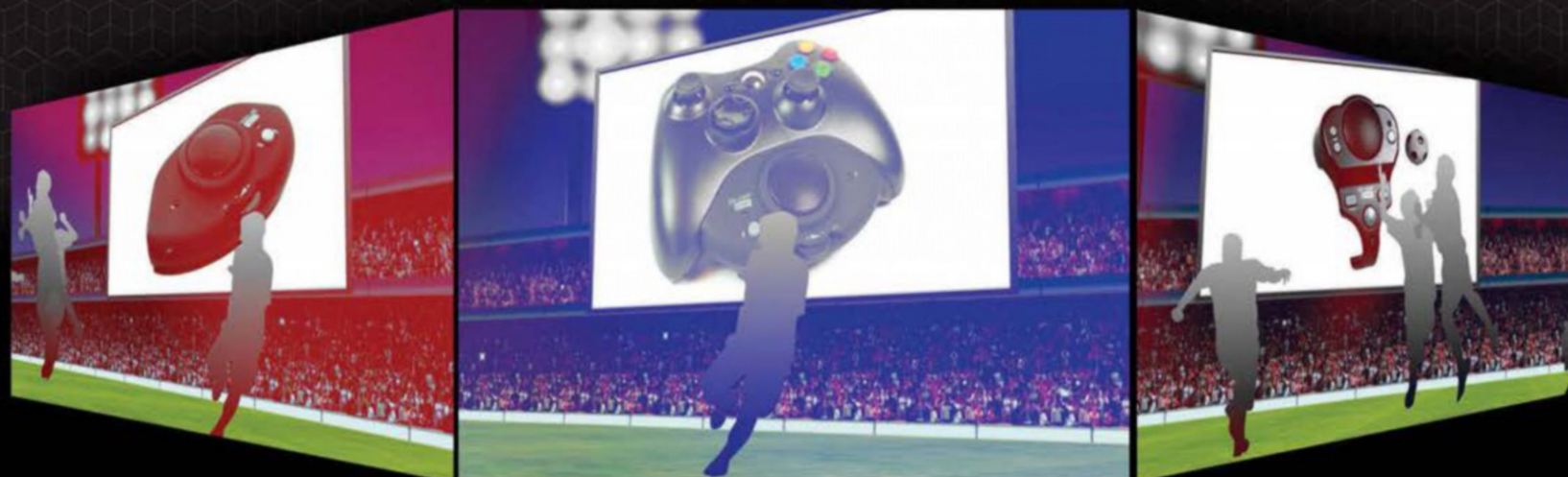
VOLUME UP / DOWN

POWER SWITCH

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ETA FEBRUARY 2014

DEV MERCURYTEAM

PUB KONAMI

TWITTER @KONAMI

Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow 2

There will be blood...



MERCURYTEAM'S RESURRECTION OF the *Castlevania* series felt like an ode to its own vampiric themes – it took something

old and haggard and brought it back to life with a vitality that was both refreshing and comfortably familiar. *Lords Of Shadow* proved that the universe of *Castlevania* does work in 3D, and bringing the gothic wonder of Gabriel Belmont's world to the fore cemented *Castlevania* as a series that could stand up alongside *God Of War* in both scale and story.

So how do you take such an acclaimed title and make it better? MercurySteam has been keen to listen to fan feedback, taking on board comments from the community during the game's development. The fixed perspectives of *Lords Of Shadow* have been replaced with a free-roaming camera, which is more suited to the open-world nature of Belmont's newest stomping ground.

The camera update also allows for *Uncharted*-esque platforming sections that see Belmont scale massive monuments – studied alone, these sections always feel a little underwhelming; *Castlevania*'s strengths lie in its combat, not its platforming. Combine the two, however, and you have monstrous encounters that feel like an unholy alliance of *Shadow Of The Colossus* and *God Of War*. *Lords Of Shadow* had titanic boss fights, but the

hellspawn. While this may be a departure from the *Castlevania* experience that longtime players may balk at, it offers an interesting combative conceit – one that ties in neatly with *LOS2*'s narrative.

Starting out in his castle, replete with all his powers and ungodly weapons, Dracula gets thrown forward in time, losing his abilities in the process. The narrative then becomes an interesting tale of an immortal man living in modern times, observing a world that's changed beyond his comprehension. Considering how engaging and well-paced the story of *LOS* was, we reckon this arc will see Dracula learn a lot more about his humanity (or lack thereof). It's a brave move by MercurySteam to travel the modern-day vampire route – but *Lords Of Shadow 2* promises to be a darker, altogether more authentically gothic approach to the mythology, unlike the recent sparkly, lipstick-vampire efforts

that saturate the general media. The world is immersive and brooding, and MercurySteam seems to understand exactly what it is that makes Dracula an iconic protagonist.

LOS2 is an equal mix of RPG, adventure and action game, glued together with an intriguing and charismatic central character. The scale of the whole game has been amplified – it isn't just the environment that's grown; between the dynamic combat, Dracula's hunt for his lost powers and the promise of a fascinating narrative, we think *Lords Of Shadow 2* has the potential to be as captivating as the original, if not even moreso.

Dom Peppiatt

CASTLEVANIA: LORDS OF SHADOW 2 is being developed by Mercury Steam. Check the website for more details: www.konami-castlevania.com

△○×□ *Castlevania: Lords Of Shadow 2* boasts a dynamic camera as opposed to the fixed-perspective one employed by its predecessor.

"DIFFERENT ENEMY TYPES REQUIRE THEIR OWN LOGIC TO BE DEFEATED"

sequel ramps the scale up massively – QTEs have been reduced to make combat more dynamic, and smaller enemies will join the fray while you attempt to take down the hulking titans.

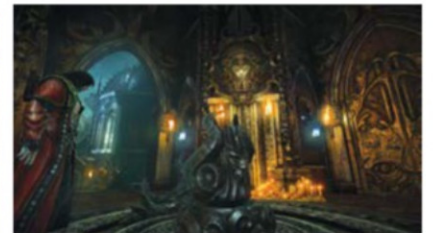
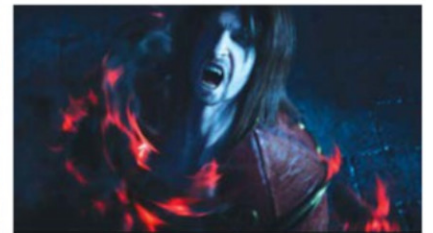
Belmont, now going under the Dracula moniker, is an undead lord that can drain the blood of his foes for health, but he's also got weaknesses – he's not a near-invincible Kratos. *Lords Of Shadow 2* will require a deeper understanding of strategy than the first game – Dracula comes equipped with devastating Chaos Claws and a Void Sword, as well as a *Castlevania*-staple whip, and each weapon is required to break through certain foes' defenses. Different enemy types require their own logic to be defeated, similarly to *Devil May Cry*'s varied



TALKING 'BOUT MY GENERATION

Why Lords Of Shadow 2 won't see a PS4 release

With a February release date, you'd think MercurySteam and Konami would have pushed for a next-gen release for their game as well. However, the developer claims that because the story started on the current generation of hardware, that's where it should end. The games were seemingly written as a pair, and it's a credit to the developer's integrity that *LOS2* will be released as the best game it can be without resources and staff being repurposed to port a next-gen version. It still looks great, and it could well be one of this generation's swansong titles.



△○×□ Although it will only appear on PS3, expect *Lords Of Shadow 2* to look stunning. Still, a PS4 version would be nice down the line...

WHAT MAKES THIS GAME GREAT?



A well-realised gothic environment with a rich open world to explore.



Action-RPG elements held together by a vibrant array of weapons and magic.



Epic boss battles on a massive scale with less QTEs and more action than the original title.



A story about vampires that's actually interesting and original.

△○×□ The city in *Lords Of Shadow 2* is built on the ruins of Dracula's castle, so expect some imposing architecture and claustrophobic level design.

Instant Expert

OPEN!

Inquisition will have the most open world yet for the series, although this isn't a true open world in the vein of *Skyrim*. Players will adventure through various areas, all enormous in their own right. Mounts will be available for quick traversal. This news will sound particularly sweet to players sick of *Dragon Age II*'s cramped setting.

MORALITY!

It wouldn't be a BioWare RPG without some tricky moral choices, and *Inquisition* looks set to deliver in this regard. A demo mission has the player deciding between defending a village set upon by marauders or leaving them to fulfil your mission of reinforcing an under-siege keep. Whatever you do, someone's going to suffer. Tough call.

SEX!

The romantic aspect of past games is being overhauled, with romance occurring in reaction to events and variables specific to each character, rather than the game-like system before of giving gifts and picking the correct conversation options. BioWare is also promising more "mature and tasteful" sex scenes. Yeah, right.

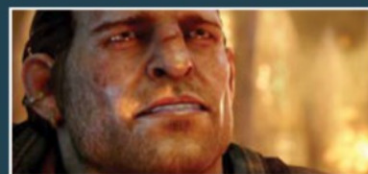
CHOICE!

Players create their own main character and can be a human, elf, dwarf or, for the first time in the series, a Qunari. Your party can also be customised more than ever before, and armour customisation has been hinted to go so far as altering the colour and patterns. Players can import their saves from the first two *Dragon Age* games to create a consistent, unique world of their making.

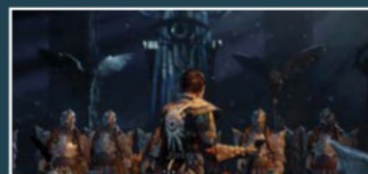
DRAGONS!

Dragon Age II was kind of rubbish, but forget about that – here's *Dragon Age: Inquisition*! For the uninitiated, *Dragon Age* is a series of action-RPGs set on the mythical continent of Thedas. Fans of BioWare's classic *Star Wars: Knights Of The Old Republic* will feel familiar with the battle system, which sees you and three party members fighting in a mixture of real-time and turn-based action.

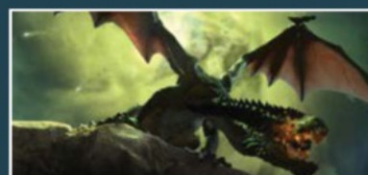
WHERE DOES BIOWARE GO FROM HERE?



BioWare used to be ruler of the RPG genre, with hits like *Baldur's Gate* and *Knights Of The Old Republic*. These days, things are bit less rosy: *Mass Effect 3* drummed up negative publicity with its rushed endings and *Dragon Age II* was heavily criticised for... well, simply not being very good.



People now hope for a new BioWare game to be a good one, rather than simply assuming it will be. Initial reaction to *Dragon Age: Inquisition* has been hesitantly positive, but we're still slightly cynical after being burned so badly by the previous game.



A new *Mass Effect* game is a certainty considering the amount of money the series has made EA. What's less likely is that we will see a straight sequel, as Shepard's story is over following the controversial ending of *Mass Effect 3*.



Otherwise, who knows? An MMO set in the *Mass Effect* universe could be excellent, but one has to imagine that BioWare is hesitant to take another stab at the genre following the failure of *The Old Republic* on PC. A fourth *Dragon Age* game isn't completely unfeasible, although it would be a few years coming.



More likely than not, BioWare will use the new generation as the launching pad for a new franchise, similar to *Mass Effect* on Xbox 360. Despite some shaky steps as of late, we can't wait to see where it goes next.

Answer: Up! Hopefully...

ETA: 2014 | DEV: BIOWARE | PUB: EA | TWITTER: @DRAGONAGE

Dragon Age: Inquisition

PS4

BioWare returns to Thedas

A World of Animals

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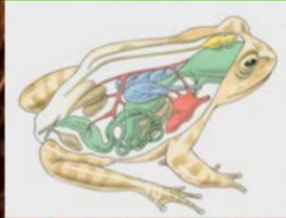
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Amazing stories



Creature cutaways



NEW

BEARS 🐾 DOLPHINS 🐾 TERMITES 🐾 PLATYPUS

A World of Animals

ISSUE ONE

LIFE OF A PENGUIN
SPEND A YEAR WITH THE EMPEROR

SHARK ATTACK
HOW GREAT WHITES HUNT THEIR PREY

PLUS
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ARCHER FISH
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50 -MOST-

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PREVIEW ROUND-UP



If, like us, you've been caught up in PS4mania for the last month, you'd probably appreciate a look at what's going on in the wider world of gaming. And what's this? Why, it's that very thing! Useful...

PS4



CHILD OF LIGHT

HAVING POURED A staggering amount of time into the amazing UbiArt engine that powers *Rayman Legends* (and previously *Origins*), it makes sense that the French team is now also exploring other uses for the beautiful 2D tech. *Child Of Light* is a fairly traditional turn-based RPG, albeit one "inspired by fairy tales and epic poems" according to Ubisoft. Can the *Far Cry 3* team make RPG battles and rhyming couplets gel? We'll find out next year, but it sure does look pretty.

RELEASE DATE: Q3 2014

PS4



DYNASTY WARRIORS 8 XTREME LEGENDS

IT SHOULD COME as little surprise that Tecmo Koei is readying another 'super' version of its latest historical genocide simulator, although the good news is that it's coming to PlayStation 4. Expect more detailed Officers, loads more enemies on-screen

at once and a bunch of new campaign stuff, including a story mode for Lu Bu. It's unlikely to be the best advert for the raw power of PlayStation 4, though at least we know *Dynasty Warriors 8* is the best the series has been for a long time.

RELEASE DATE: 22 FEBRUARY (JAPAN)

PS4



RYU GA GOTOKU ISHIN!

TO ITS CREDIT, Sega has been pretty good to Western fans of the *Yakuza* games, although well-received historical spin-off *Kenzan!* was one of the few games to slip through the net. With this in mind, we can use the power of logic to predict that the same will most likely be true of *Ishin!*, a feudal twist on the popular mob sim. Still, it's a PS4 launch title in Japan so anyone interested will be able to import early next year and test out the PS4's region-free capabilities.

RELEASE DATE: 22 FEBRUARY (JAPAN)

PS4



SHADOW OF THE BEAST

WELL, THIS IS an odd one. It's a reboot of another retro 'classic' (the term here used rather more generously than in *Strider's* case), although the original *Shadow Of The Beast* was created by Psygnosis, which would go on to become Sony Studio Liverpool and then sadly close last year. We can think of better ways to keep the studio's legacy going than a remake of a game that was famously a tragic case of style over substance but hey... maybe it'll accidentally be amazing.

RELEASE DATE: Q4 2014

PS4



KINGDOM HEARTS III

THE CROSSOVER POTENTIAL of the *Kingdom Hearts* franchise has always been huge. But now, in a world where Disney owns both *Marvel* and *Star Wars*, the stars have aligned and Square can throw together a mountain of fan service the likes of which the world has never seen. Licence agreements and clauses mean it'll probably never happen to the degree we'd like to see, though we're sure there'll be more than a few surprises up Sora's oversized sleeves if and when the game ever gets finished.

RELEASE DATE: Q4 2014



STRIDER

YOU KNOW THAT ninja dude in *Marvel Vs Capcom* who you didn't recognise? Consider yourself educated. In the same vein as the 1989 original, *Strider* is a speedy side-scrolling action game where the titular hero goes nuts with sword swipes and flips. It's like *Sonic* but with ninjas, basically. And with one big open world to explore and slash to bits, we just hope guest developer Double Helix can do *Strider* justice – fans have been waiting a long time for this comeback, after all.

RELEASE DATE: Q1 2014



THE LEGO MOVIE VIDEOGAME

AND THE META-CIRCLE is complete. Warner Bros' merciless brickification of all of popular culture has lead to this, a game that is effectively *Lego Lego*. Tied into the movie that opens on the same day, this adventure might not have the iconic moments and characters that make the family-friendly franchise shine but it's a good chance to see whether or not the format still holds up without them. Our guess is 'no', though we'd be happy to be proven wrong.

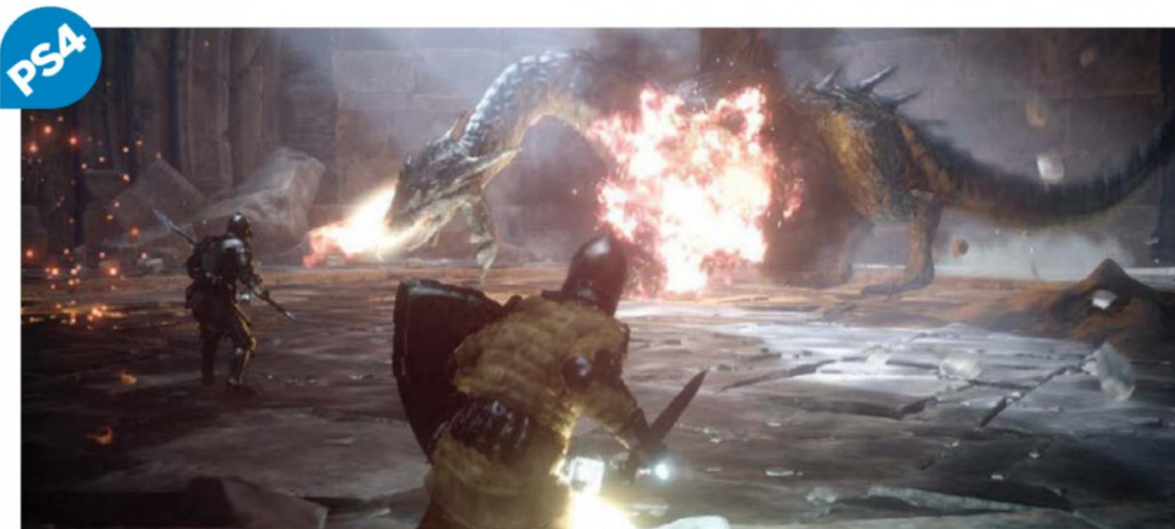
RELEASE DATE: 14 FEBRUARY 2014



FINAL FANTASY X/X-2 REMASTER

VITA CHAMPIONS HAVE been calling for a *Final Fantasy* game on the system since it was announced and, while these aren't new (or, in the case of X-2, particularly good) ones, a strong reception to the handheld versions would surely send Square the right message. Namely, 'why are you reading this instead of localising *Final Fantasy Type-0*?' or something along those lines. Please, guys. It's the right thing to do...

RELEASE DATE: Q1 2014



DEEP DOWN

CAPCOM'S FANTASY RPG was one of the first PlayStation 4 games to be revealed back in February, though it's grown more interesting with every new morsel of information that has slipped out since. An engine tech demo silenced those who dismissed the original dragon footage as pre-rendered, while follow-up demos of some of the game's jaw-dropping special effects really showed what kind of impact advanced physics tech will be able to make on next-gen games.

RELEASE DATE: Q4 2014

Despite the game looking all kinds of incredible, it'll reportedly be free-to-play – how Capcom will manage to monetise it remains to be seen, though it'll likely limit the number of quests that can be done per day and have would-be adventurers choose between waiting and paying. Oh, and it's got nothing to do with *Dragon's Dogma*, either. Capcom wanted to make a fresh start on a fresh platform, so this is a brand new game – one that we hope doesn't slip into pay-to-win territory, because it looks ace.



EA SPORTS UFC

CONSIDERING THAT EA'S last stab at an MMA game was actually pretty good, it's no bad thing (nor a surprise, for that matter) that the EA Sports team wound up picking up the biggest licence in the business after THQ tapped out. There's been little more than some early pre-alpha footage to go on so far, but the basics look to pretty much be there – here's hoping that its controls are tighter and the action less robotic than the otherwise enjoyable MMA games that have gone before it.

RELEASE DATE: Q2 2014

HOW THE CLOUD WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU PLAY

You've probably heard a lot about how the cloud is going to be great for gaming. Here's a rough route map of how the next ten years might play out and why you should care about the advantages the cloud brings...

TODAY

Even if you don't really know what the cloud is, there's a good chance you've used it at some point. From MMO server-side saving to backing up game saves online to sharing save data between PS3 and Vita, many of us are already making use of the cloud's functionality. But as this new generation begins, the potential of the cloud is about to get more impressive. PS4's Remote Play function is an

introduction to cloud gaming, using the new console as the server and allowing any piece of software contained on the hard drive to be remotely launched from Vita. While greater distance between the two generally equates to more lag, the tech is no less amazing for it, even though this scenario is simply the PS4 doing an impression of the cloud.

Microsoft, meanwhile, has been making plenty of claims about what its take on the cloud can do, and it's a



△○×□ Even pretty games like *Knack* can be streamed flawlessly to devices like Vita.

STREAMING GAMES



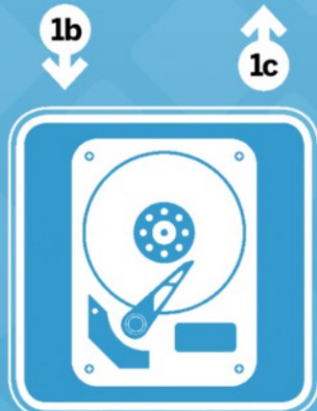
CONTROLLER INPUT



STREAMING VIDEO



INTERNET



DATA CENTER

■ **1a** In the case of traditional streaming, controller inputs are read by the device being used before being passed onto a data center via the internet.

■ **1b** These data centers would typically consist of numerous consoles or console-spec PCs rigged to run the available games remotely.

■ **1c** Inputs are read and translated into movement or action in the game, with the resulting footage outputted and streamed directly to the player.

■ **1d** Due to all the computation being done server-side, this can produce visuals far better than the device being used would usually be capable of.

CLOUD GAMES



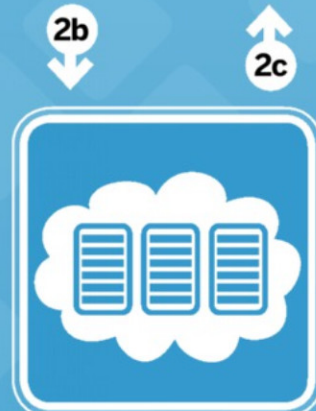
CONTROLLER INPUT



STREAMING VIDEO



INTERNET



CLOUD

■ **2a** The setup is much the same for pure cloud gaming, only with one virtual supercomputer used for processing rather than individual machines.

■ **2b** Having everything done remotely means that the cloud can be used to enhance rendering and AI, improving the overall gameplay experience.

■ **2c** Again, resulting footage is fed back to players directly. Here, though, the upside is that there's only network lag and no game lag to contend with.

■ **2d** Once again, the footage that comes back will be even better than what the host device can produce. Your PS4 will just keep getting better...

slightly different approach to Sony's. Microsoft believes that pure cloud computing is the key, attempting to make up for Xbox One's lack of technical clout by allowing it to outsource machine code to be processed in the cloud. While the principle is sound and already employed in numerous computing solutions, its benefit to gaming is still unproven – so many routines involved in rendering modern games

need to be done so fast that the inherent latency of using the cloud would simply make it impossible to have the data returned fast enough to work. The solution, it seems, is

to use cloud processing for less time-sensitive tasks, such as weather and additional effects. Will it truly prove beneficial for gaming? We'll see in time. And if it does, you can bet Microsoft won't be the only one using it for long...

“MICROSOFT HAS BEEN MAKING PLENTY OF CLAIMS ABOUT WHAT ITS TAKE ON THE CLOUD CAN DO”

△××△ If you're live-streaming and using Remote Play, you're already using the cloud.



△××△ Xbox One launch title Forza 5 makes extensive use of the cloud for its driver AI.



ONE YEAR ON

While many are sad to see the back of backwards compatibility on PS4, it's good to know that Sony at least has a plan to cover this shortcoming. But that plan didn't come cheap, with Sony forking out almost \$400 million to acquire cloud gaming service Gaikai. And while the first benefits of this acquisition are already being seen in the form of Remote Play on Vita, the real meat is still to come – Sony will be rolling out its game-streaming service on PS4 early next year in the US before expanding the operation into other territories.

What this means is that Sony can offer entire catalogues of games that can be streamed direct from a remote server, potentially offering entire first-party back catalogues across every single PlayStation format – it'll begin with just a small portfolio of PS3 games but once it's a proven success, we've no doubt that it'll roll out on a far greater scale. Sony is free to enter into deals with other publishers in order to get third-party games on the service as well, though there's no indication yet of exactly what form this Gaikai-powered service will take – PS Plus subscribers could have access to a limited catalogue of streamed games, for instance, or a second subscription

“WE'D GLADLY PAY EXTRA TO HAVE INSTANT ACCESS TO EVERY PLAYSTATION GAME EVER MADE”

could grant access to every single PSone, PS2 and PS3 game. We'd gladly pay a little extra to have instant access to every PlayStation game ever made – or even a decent cross section, to be honest – and we're sure we're not alone.

FIVE YEARS ON

By the time high-speed fibre broadband is the standard and we have a digital infrastructure to be proud of, Microsoft's vision of using cloud services to boost processing power and create better games will be far closer to a reality. While

it's not going to trouble the clock speeds of a decent processor any time soon, enhanced network speeds will at least improve the rate and quantity of data that can be offloaded. With consoles built with this functionality in mind, the result will be a generation that doesn't

drag, rather one where network improvements also lead to tangible gameplay and visual improvements – a generation where the hardware itself evolves over time, basically.

In addition, Sony should have a pretty healthy streaming service on the go by this point, with Gaikai's tech allowing players to play whatever retro classics they like by running them direct from the cloud. While not directly cloud-related,



△○×□ In a few years, this'll run perfectly on your phone. You won't even need a console...



△○×□ The social features of DriveClub will likely make use of the cloud to some extent.

we'll likely have seen Sony's intriguing 'remote control' feature come into effect by this point, worth mentioning as it will work on the same principles as Remote Play – players will be able to jump into someone else's game (with their permission, presumably) and take control remotely, streaming the game from the host machine to the remote player's console and letting people try out games or help out those in need.

TEN YEARS ON

And a decade from now, you won't even need a console to play the latest PlayStation games. By this point, televisions themselves will likely have enough processing power to send and return the HD data needed to stream games – your PlayStation Plus should be all you need to stream whatever games you want direct to whatever device you choose. Consoles will still exist for the hardcore, for whom latency of any kind renders technical games like fighters or rhythm-action unplayable at any kind of decent level. But games themselves will probably be primarily provided through some kind of cloud solution by this point.

With a future-proof PS4 under your TV, though, you'll be ready. Whether playing your favourite PlayStation games on branded hardware or streaming them straight to your phone, tablet, TV, computer or television, the cloud is going to be big news for gamers, so it's probably not a bad idea to start getting acquainted with it now...



DAVID LINTHICUM

SVP Cloud Technology Partners' expert talks us through the power of the cloud

In layman's terms, what is the cloud?

Cloud is the concept of leveraging IT resources that exist on remote servers, typically sharing these resources with many tenants. Some of these resources are remote, or public clouds. Some are in your data center, or private clouds. Those leveraging clouds only pay for the resources they leverage, and can expand or contract the use of these resources on-demand.

Roughly what kind of server capacity are Sony and MS likely to need per console in order to offer every gamer a significant benefit – in terms of both storage and computation – from the cloud?

Based on some very rudimentary assumptions, each console should require roughly one virtual cloud-delivered server per ten tenants, or consoles. This will vary a great deal considering the compute and storage I/O requirements for the game. In other words, a massive amount of computing power is required.

Do you think the cloud offers as much in terms of benefits for games consoles as it does for computing?

The core idea is to offload some or most of the processing to back-end systems, leaving the console to manage interaction with the gamer, pushing the heavy lifting to the back-end servers in the cloud. This approach to distributed processing should provide a higher performing gaming experience, and not force as many console upgrades.

Microsoft is claiming that Xbox One games will be drastically improved by the cloud's 'infinite power' – is using cloud computing as a replacement for (or in addition to) CPU computation actually viable and to what degree?

See my previous response, but the idea is very sound. If the processing is pushed to the back-end cloud servers, typically computational intensive tasks, the better the videogames will perform. At some point most of the game processing will exist in the clouds, with the consoles, Smart TVs and mobile devices just providing the interface management for the gamer. The end state should be more cost-effective gaming, with fewer device and console upgrades.

Are there any notable uses of cloud computing that games consoles could stand to take advantage of in the near future?

As we stated, moving computationally intensive tasks to a back-end cloud server, thus speeding up game consoles. That is the near-term objective of leveraging cloud computing with game systems. This should include rendering, multi-media storage, multi-gamer play and other tasks that make good architectural sense to move off the console.

TOP TEN OVERLOOKED PS3 CLASSICS

AS WE ENTER THE NEXT GENERATION, SPARE A THOUGHT FOR THOSE CRUELLY OVERLOOKED PS3 GAMES, IGNORED AND FORGOTTEN BY THE MASSES DESPITE THEIR EXCELLENCE. TRY TO FIND THE TIME TO PEEL YOURSELF AWAY FROM THE PS4 AND APPRECIATE SOME OF THE FORGOTTEN GREATNESS THAT CAME OUT OF THE LAST GEN. PLUS, MOST OF THEM ARE REALLY CHEAP!



VALKYRIA CHRONICLES

1 We really like this game, to the extent that we'd say it's one of the best PS3 exclusives. *Valkyria Chronicles* is a game unlike any other, mixing elements of turn-based strategy and third-person shooting to create something truly idiosyncratic. Beautiful visuals aping a hand-drawn style and an emotional story with great characters round out a masterpiece that never got the recognition it deserved. Two PSP sequels followed, the second of which never left Japan, but the original is still the high point in a series that we really hope we haven't seen the last of.



SPEC OPS: THE LINE

6 *Spec Ops* might not have broken any ground with its standard third-person shooter gameplay, but the story set it apart from all the dumb dude-bro shooters crowding the market. Inspired by Conrad's *Heart Of Darkness*, *Spec Ops* tells a story of soldiers cut off from society at large and left to rot in a dying, isolated Dubai. It's dark, disturbing and definitely not for kids, but also one of the most thought-provoking tales we've seen in a game. It also features one of the best performances to date from Nolan 'I've been in every game' North.



RESONANCE OF FATE

2 Another JRPG that did things differently, *Resonance Of Fate* features a bizarre battle system inspired by John Woo films. Characters flip in slow motion, raining down bullets on foes with real-world guns despite the fantastical setting. Progression is also unique, players placing down pieces of a map on which they can then advance to find more pieces and repeat the process. It's not coincidence that many of the team that made *Valkyria Chronicles* went on to work on *Resonance Of Fate*: both are new takes on the JRPG and both are worth your time.



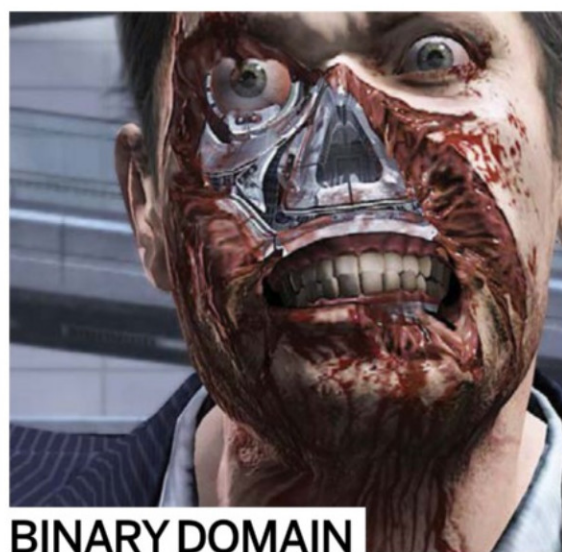
OKAMI HD

7 When it comes to great games that not enough people have played, *Okami* is an easy pick. One of the last games from the fabled Clover Studio (the guys responsible for *Viewtiful Joe* and *God Hand*), *Okami* is a beautiful action-adventure starring the sun goddess Amaterasu in the form of a white wolf. Using a hand-drawn, Japanese ink wash painting style, the game looked amazing on PS2 and even better in the HD re-release on PS3. Similar in structure to a *Zelda* game, Ammy must travel the world and repair the damage done by the demon Orochi.



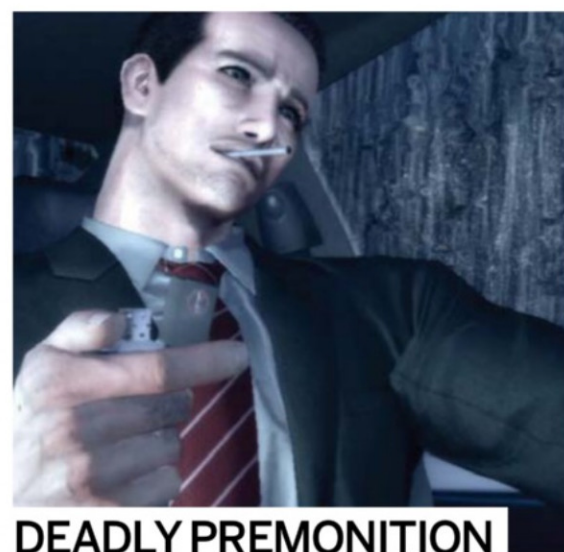
VANQUISH

3 Platinum Games is one of our favourite developers here at **Play** – we'd argue no one makes a better action game. *Bayonetta* and *Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance* may have gotten more attention but *Vanquish* was one of the most balls-to-the-wall crazy games we've ever played. Taking control of a pissed-off stereotype in a ludicrously advanced robot suit, players jet around at mental speeds, vaulting over enormous mechs and punching dudes so hard they explode while hundreds of missiles rain down above. Yeah... it's as good as it sounds.



BINARY DOMAIN

4 Another third-person shooter out of Japan with a tiny marketing budget but a quirky personality and surprisingly solid gameplay, *Binary Domain* can be picked up for pennies these days. Designed by the guy that made *Yakuza*, *Binary Domain* takes place in a near future rife with robotics and androids that are impossible to differentiate from people. A relatively thoughtful premise quickly descends into crazy explosions and nonsense action-movie one-liners: just the way we like it. It might seem a bit sketchy at a glance, but try to trust us on this one.



DEADLY PREMONITION

5 One of the worst games of the generation is also one of the best. *Deadly Premonition* is a terribly acted, buggy, broken mess of a game that is tonally lost somewhere between *Resident Evil* and *Twin Peaks*. Those are some of the reasons it's great. *Deadly Premonition* is a bizarre fever dream of a game, utterly mundane aspects mixed with a surreal feeling that permeates the entire thing and gives it a vibe unlike any other game. Plus, behind all the weirdness and monologues about Eighties films, there's actually a pretty good murder mystery to unravel.



STREET FIGHTER III: 3RD STRIKE ONLINE EDITION

8 *Street Fighter IV* brought fighting games back into the spotlight this generation, and the genre is seeing a resurgence with great games like *Marvel Vs Capcom 3* and *Persona 4 Arena*. For the best *Street Fighter* game ever made though, we need to look back to *Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike*, originally released in 1999. Thanks to an excellent HD port from Iron Galaxy, everyone can experience a game that has remained a favourite among the hardcore for over a decade. If *Street Fighter IV* is the starter, *3rd Strike* is the main course.



TOKYO JUNGLE

9 Not many games let you play as a Pomeranian trying to survive in a post-apocalyptic Tokyo where humanity has mysteriously disappeared – in fact, only one game does, and its name is *Tokyo Jungle*. You can play as a variety of animals, from vicious predators to tiny prey, in one of the most bizarre and funny games in recent memory. Deer, lions, hyenas, beagles, kangaroos, pandas, dinosaurs... there's a huge amount of choice. It's only on PlayStation Network and it barely costs anything, so give it a try. You won't forget it in a hurry.



WARHAMMER 40,000: SPACE MARINE

10 *Space Marine* wasn't outstanding from a purely objective standpoint, but for Warhammer fans, Relic's brawler was a rare treat. Few games have nailed the grim atmosphere of the dark future so well, and cutting through hordes of orks with chainsword and blaster pistol is some of the most satisfying combat of the generation. It's a rather one-note experience, but it gets that note (ultraviolence) spot on. You can pick it up for mere peanuts these days, and it's well worth a try for those fancying some brain-dead, button-mashing fun.

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Killzone: Shadow Fall

For your eyes only



DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Sony

DEVELOPER

Guerrilla Games

PRICE

£49.99

PLAYERS

1-24

INSTALL SIZE

41GB

AGE RATING

18+

TWITTER

@Killzone

Trophies 33



LET'S GET THE bloody obvious out of the way first, shall we? *Killzone: Shadow Fall* is hands-

down the best looking game you've ever played on a Sony machine. It is, quite simply, stunning to look at and unlike anything else you've ever seen to date on console hardware.

And even if that somehow doesn't leave you sufficiently impressed, then let it be known that Guerrilla Games is quite clearly very impressed with *itself*. The stalwart Sony studio devotes an inordinate amount of time in the game's opening to its astonishing technical achievement, giving the player ample opportunity to absorb every last inch of its immaculately created sci-fi visage. The first few minutes alone overdose on extreme close-ups of its characters to such a degree you can almost smell the Listerine, yet it's impossible not to be impressed by the visual advancements on display. Smoother animations, a huge amount of texture detail and a nuanced array of mannerisms imbue the game with a tangible sense of human drama (sadly, only let down by the less-than-inspiring story – but more on that later).

The environments are particularly spectacular, and the first (again, overindulgent) glimpse of *Shadow Fall*'s Vekta (the glittering citadel that functions as the game's primary location) is the sort of graphics porn that'd make the palms of any slider-twiddling PC purist sweat. Cloud-

piercing skyscrapers shimmering in the mid-morning sun, queues of incidental NPCs littered across multiple districts and an insane level of micro-detail gives off the impression that Guerrilla might just be showboating.

Lighting especially seems to be where the developer has invested heavily, and it's clear that the artists have utilised the enhanced power of the PlayStation 4 to create the most striking environments we've seen in any *Killzone* title, drenching the screen in sun-soaked vistas, mesmerising reflections and the most overt use of lens flare in videogame history. Far from the orange and brown landscapes of its predecessors, the game consistently delivers whether on a scale big or small. In particular, later levels set among the dirt and desolation of the Helghan people's ramshackle, post-planet-oblivion existence demonstrates an eye for precise detail

that says much for what will be possible in the future on Sony's new hardware.

Further to the studio's credit, it has also managed to actually create locations that feel part of a much larger fantasy universe. There's a high quality of design here that has more in common with BioWare than any of its genre contemporaries and the game feels much richer and more immersive because of it. Whereas *Killzone* has always felt malnourished as a legitimate sci-fi universe in the past, the painstaking detail implemented into each of *Shadow Fall*'s locations sells the world as part of something much bigger.

There's also an unexpected dynamism to the majority of the stages, each with its own unique flavour and clear influences. Levels get blown-up, have holes torn through the centre of them and then, as if that wasn't all traumatic enough, get catapulted into the sky. It constantly



“PUNCHY AND CONSISTENTLY TENSE, IT DOES MUCH TO SATISFY THE BLOODTHIRSTY GAMER WITH POUNDING WAVES OF ENEMIES WAITING TO BE MOWED DOWN”

demands the player to adapt to extreme circumstances, brace for impact and inventively navigate through some of its most perilous dangers.

One mission involves investigating a derelict space station; a parade of horror tropes are underlined by a sparse soundtrack that wouldn't feel out of place in a *Dead Space* sequel. But then it shifts gears, again and again and again. It jumps from survival horror into a tense shootout via zero gravity a couple of times before making a pit stop for an environmental puzzle, then settles into a rocketing action sequence for its climax (using the proximity of the sun to melt platforms and set fire to enemies caught in its harsh rays for too long). This is *Killzone: Shadow Fall* at its best; an immensely creative, unpredictable and gratifying rollercoaster of action.

Inevitably, it fails to maintain this momentum and later levels opt to up the difficulty quite substantially without backing it up with elevated spectacle or new toys to play with. The last couple of missions almost wholly consist of disabling large artillery units, while the climax of the game is set within a location that was ripped out of *Sci-Fi Videogame Level Design 101*. And when the game removes the ground from beneath the player for further zero gravity sequences – a late planet-based level features erupting pockets of anti-gravity matter – it's as if Guerrilla ran out of ideas entirely.

Nevertheless, there are a several additions to the *Killzone* formula that help to enliven the gameplay. New to the franchise is the inclusion of OWL – a robotic companion that can aid the player throughout the vast majority of the campaign. He has six different functions, four of which – attack, stun, shield and zipline – can be selected using the DualShock 4 touchpad (acting most reliably as a second D-pad of sorts), while the other two are a context-sensitive hack function and a



TOUCH CONTROL

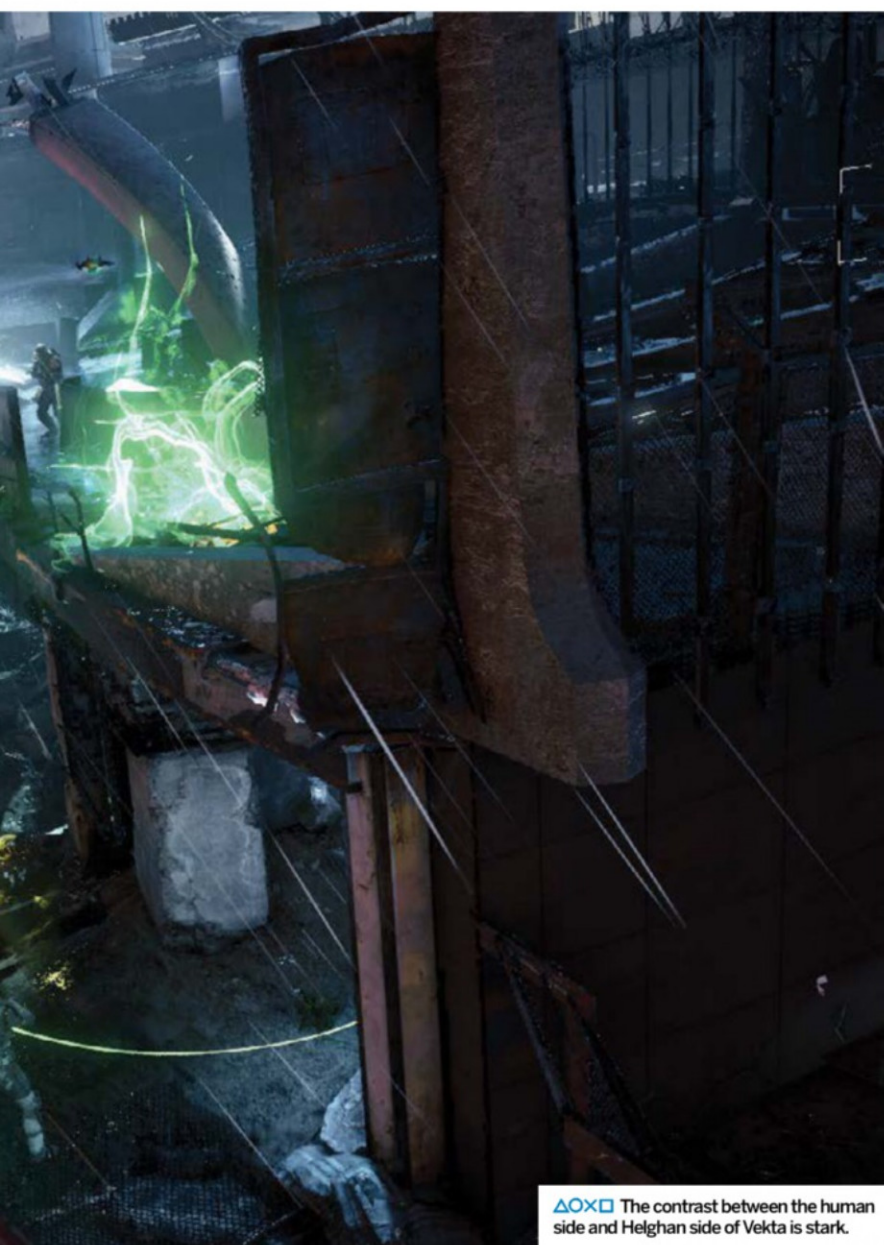
OWL

The DualShock 4 touchpad is occupied entirely by your AI drone OWL, with a radial allowing you to swipe towards whichever mode you wish to select.

last-second medkit-aided revive. OWL is never pressed upon the player (aside from the odd terminal that needs to be hacked to proceed or a gap that needs to be traversed) but its usefulness and skill that it brings to the battlefield make it indispensable. As *Killzone*'s already excellent, smart and tactical enemy AI gets a behavioural boost, OWL's assistance becomes fundamental to making it out of a shootout alive, as squads of enemies constantly flank from every side. In fact, one of the biggest disappointments of *Shadow Fall* is how underused OWL can feel at times. There's a stage early in the campaign that enables the player to explore its entire functionality without restraint; a huge open forest setting that allows for players to zipline quickly between treetop platforms, stun enemies, disable alarms in advance and get the edge on

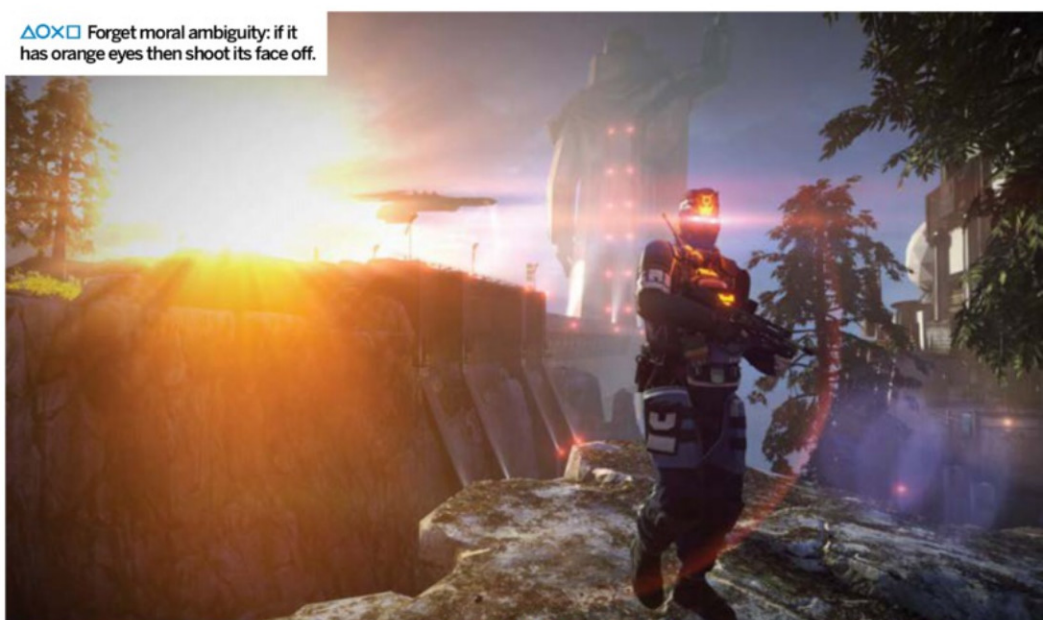
△×□ While there are plenty of guns, you'll mostly use the one you start the game with.





ΔOX□ The contrast between the human side and Helghan side of Vekta is stark.

ΔOX□ Forget moral ambiguity: if it has orange eyes then shoot its face off.



ΔOX□ That dude that blew-up in Series 2 of *Homeland* acts as the hero's mentor.



opponents. It can be quickly mastered and invites the type of slick, techno-infused gameplay that the *Crysis* series has always sought to deliver, yet it's one of too few instances where the new feature is given room to really stand out, as the campaign becomes more linear as the game progresses. By the time you reach the last few chapters of what is in general a very well-paced campaign, OWL proves itself more useful as a simple defensive weapon – either to shield you against an unrelenting attack or to suppress incoming fire.

It then comes down to how *Killzone: Shadow Fall* performs among the high-ranking first-person shooters in the genre, and once again the series delivers when it comes down to the fundamentals. Shooting is tight and hefty, boasting that satisfying response and weightiness distinct to each

weapon, even if the game doesn't give you much reason to use anything but the rifle you're equipped with from the very first mission. There are a couple of other notable fumbles in the basic set-up: jumping lacks basic inertia, losing the momentum built in the run-up before launching off a platform – almost as if you're a toddler being kept on a leash. Then there's the auto snap-to-cover, which is frustratingly inconsistent – it was quite common to find ourselves trying to aim over cover, only to be rather ironically obstructed by it. Ignore these minor infractions and you have the mechanical makings for an incredibly polished entry in the genre.

But you'd expect what is in essence the first fully-fledged first-person shooter of the next-generation to at least rise to the standards of the generation just past. The real question is, despite



PLAY CHALLENGE

all the whizz-bang of its visuals and immersive nature of its refined animations and physics, how does Guerrilla take advantage of the extra power and grunt of the PlayStation 4? The truth is that there isn't much evidence to suggest it does.

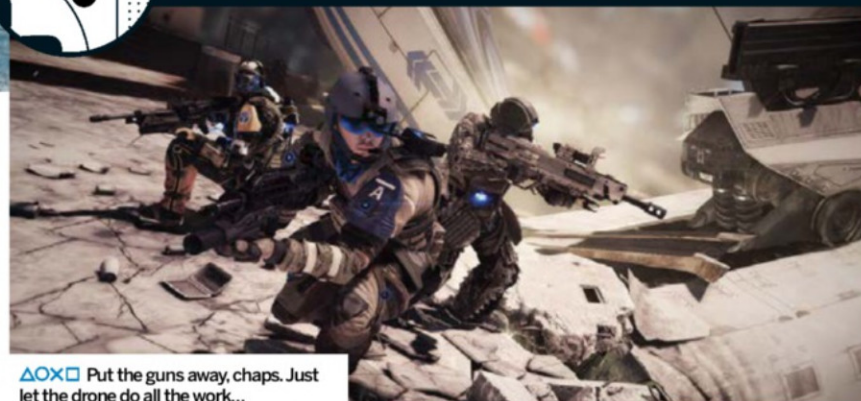
The new features it implements invite interesting combat scenarios but the game rarely gives you an opportunity to make use of them in a meaningful manner. Spaces become increasingly confined and the lack of verticality bottlenecks play into unfortunate pop-shooting, while enemy AI, impressive as it is, doesn't seem to have made a significant leap from its franchise predecessor.

It toys with the idea of offering something progressive and open to players. A mission to rescue hostages across several floors that gives players the option to either storm in or take the stealthy approach is a rare example of *Shadow Fall* presenting tactical options. However, anything other than a direct approach doesn't feel viable and levels soon downgrade to corridors, with all the strategic freedom all but forgotten.

Guerrilla had clearly run out of something, be it creativity, money

or time. It's just a shame that it fails to maintain the momentum demonstrated throughout the first few hours of the campaign. Despite this, even when *Killzone: Shadow Fall* falls into the routine of FPS at its most uninspired, it's a hell of a ride; punchy and consistently tense, it does much to satisfy the bloodthirsty gamer with pounding waves of enemies waiting to be mowed down in *Killzone's* inimitable over-the-top manner.

While *Killzone 3* tried to have a bit more fun with its conceit, shifting its tone from the wartime drama to something more awkwardly dudebro, *Killzone: Shadow Fall* slips back into a more comfortable shoes as it deals with shady politics and dodgy military actions. Playing as Lucas Kellen, you're an ISA Shadow Marshal who undertakes a series of covert, black ops-style missions in a bid to protect the human side of Vekta – a city split between the Helghast and native Vektans, separated by a big old analogous wall. For the most part it's cliché-ridden sci-fi nonsense that lacks any real intelligence to elegantly explore its complex themes, and ultimately delivers on the bad guy switcheroo that the franchise has hinted towards over its previous



△×□ Put the guns away, chaps. Just let the drone do all the work...

SHARE THESE FEATS, IF YOU CAN...



PISTOL WHIPPED

△ TRY AND MAKE it through the entirety of the campaign equipped only with the pistol that Lucas starts the game with.



OWL, THAT HURT!

□ FEELING LAZY? COMPLETE the campaign only using OWL (or assisting AI) to kill enemies.

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PlayStation 3 outings. Despite this, the cast deliver some impressive performances and the quality of motion and facial capture is high, even if it doesn't quite hit the level of Quantic Dream or Naughty Dog.

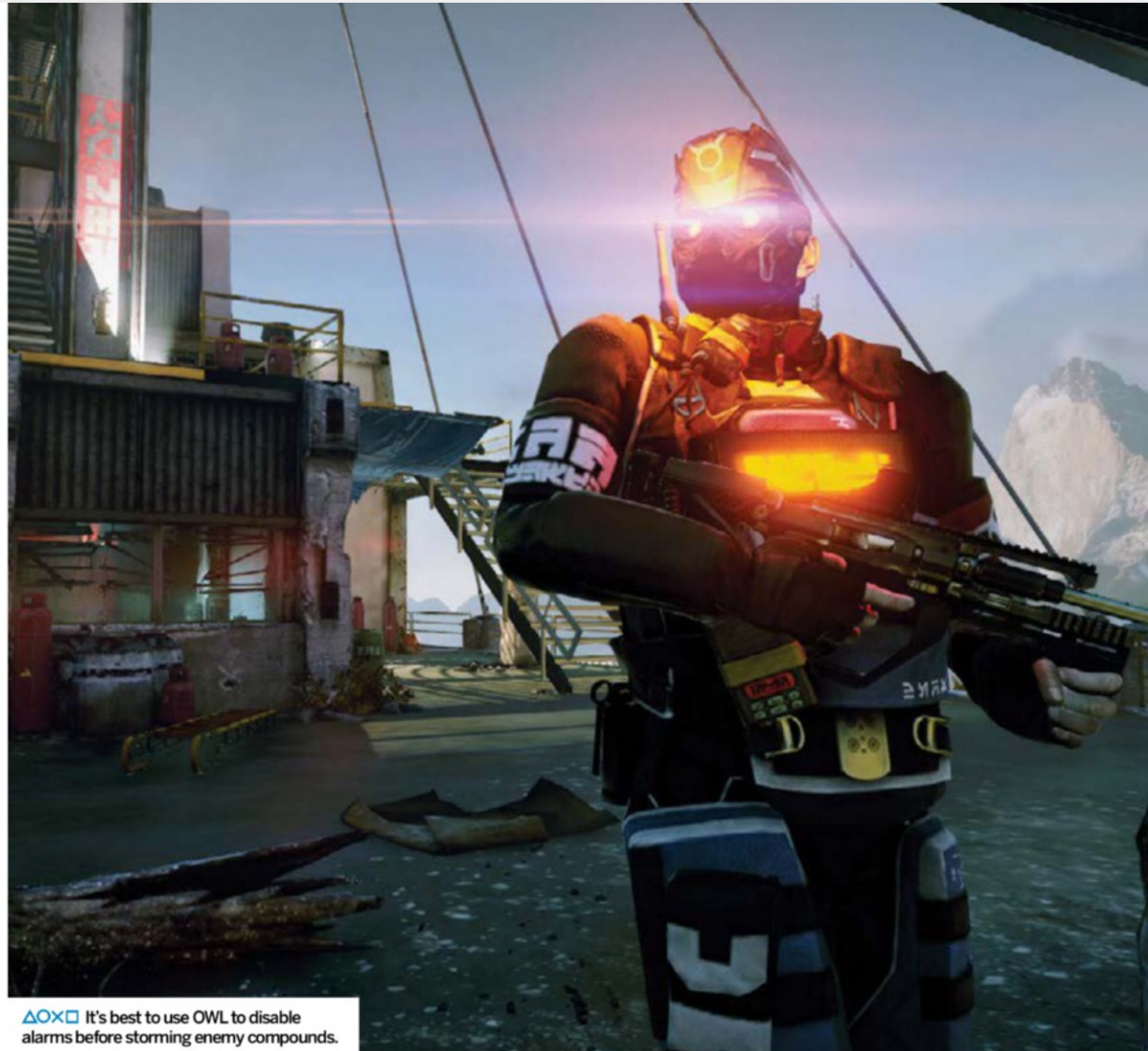
Unsurprisingly, there's not a lot in the plot to offer much variety in the way of objectives. The majority of it involves inserting giant batteries into generators to power machines (boring) and doors (even more

boring), occasionally mixing things up by powering up a generator to specifically blow it up (slightly less boring). Everything feels a little lost outside of all the slaughtering of enemy troops (fun).

It's far from a terrible game, but rather fails to live up to the promise of its early triumphs – the open-ended level design and inventive techno-ally – and sets itself on a downward spiral from about midway through its eight-



△OX□ We're pretty sure the protagonist shrinks gradually through the campaign.



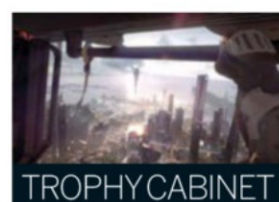
△OX□ It's best to use OWL to disable alarms before storming enemy compounds.

or-so hour campaign. Nevertheless, while its gameplay and story aren't a particular revolution, *Killzone: Shadow Fall* does more than deliver what you'd expect from a next-gen system in regards to exploring the potential of the console, more so than any other launch game we've played. Running at a native 1080p resolution and 30 frames per second (60 in multiplayer) with nary a sign of texture pop-in or other technical hiccups that usually blot a game of this ambition, it's a hugely impressive technical feat that underlines the core gameplay.

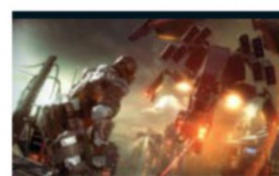
And for the most part that gameplay is classic *Killzone*, all visceral action and confident punch, enhanced by the PlayStation 4. Even the DualShock

4 makes all the difference which, alongside audio logs playing through the controller's in-built speaker, makes subtle improvements to the way in which you play. The sticks, for instance, remove the dreaded dead-zone that irked some DualShock 3 users, making for more precise aiming. In fact, you won't even notice that Guerrilla elected to remove auto assist, such is the vast difference in performance it creates. Let's also talk about those new triggers, the curve of which makes for more weighted and satisfying shooting.

And that's really the crux of what *Killzone: Shadow Fall* is: an incredibly refined and exhilarating first-person shooter that shows flashes of genuine



TROPHY CABINET
Kill six Helghast with headshots within one adrenaline rush. An easy trophy in a crowded corridor.



Complete 'The Saviour' mission without being spotted. Harder than it sounds, given stealth is utter pants.

ingenuity within the genre. It's fair to say that its reach far exceeds its grasp, which is a shame given that it comes very close to achieving so much more and being more than just another routine shooter; its early bursts of brilliance, which successfully juggle spectacular scenery and open-ended environments with immersive mechanics, fade to be replaced by familiar corridors and regrettably superficial design.

Despite this there's plenty of fun to be had and it's without a doubt the first exclusive to really demonstrate the power of the PlayStation 4. In that regard, it sets a very high benchmark for what can be achieved on Sony's new console, while only giving a hint at what innovative gaming experiences are waiting to be discovered in the hardware's future.

Dave Scarborough

VERDICT

The PS4's first exclusive shooter is a gratifying experience, plus online competitive play appears to be as rock-solid as ever. You won't find a better-looking game this side of Christmas, either.

80%



△OX□ As impressive as the visuals are, it does suffer from cloned NPCs.



Call Of Duty: Ghosts

Is it still king of the hill?

△○×□ Space! Don't expect any huge gameplay changes – sure, you can float up and down, but it's all remarkably similar to the underwater levels. Hmmm.



REVIEWING A GAME like *Call Of Duty* is, in many ways, a futile gesture. You already know what you are going to be

getting, and you already know whether you will like it. In a way, the series has transcended its medium – there are millions who only play *COD* and *FIFA*, never touching any other game.

So, surprise surprise, *Call Of Duty: Ghosts* is a very similar game to its predecessors. It's still one of the most accomplished FPS engines on the market, polished to a fine sheen over years of use. It's still primarily an online, multiplayer experience with a short single-player campaign thrown in almost as a concession. Basically, it's still *Call Of Duty*.

Those expecting a new, next-gen experience on their new, next-gen consoles might be disappointed. This is very much a current-gen game, and the PS4 and Xbox One versions have little extra besides some higher resolutions,

shinier lightning affects and advanced fish AI. It is worth noting that the PS4 version runs at 1080p (well, after the day-one patch) while the Xbox One is locked to 720p, and after seeing the two running side-by-side, the difference is clear to see.

The single-player campaign in *Call Of Duty* has felt increasingly redundant as

In a way, the series has been living in its shadow ever since.

Ghosts' campaign does nothing to break the mould, following the template set by past games to the letter. The problem is that constant amplification of the stakes has left the game feeling like a parody of what it once was. *Modern Warfare* was memorable for a

“THE CAMPAIGN ADHERES TO THE ‘FOLLOW THE MAN’ TEMPLATE TO THE LETTER”

the years have passed, the incredible ride of the first *Modern Warfare* being repeated to the point of boredom and becoming overshadowed by the hugely popular multiplayer. It's remarkable how quickly the same ideas that were revolutionary in *Modern Warfare* have since become so commonplace and uninspired, a testament to how much of a game-changer *Call Of Duty 4* was.

story told at a breakneck pace with a few outstanding moments, but when those moments happen every ten minutes they lose their impact.

The plot itself is poorly told, even for a *Call Of Duty* game. Taking place in the near future, the introduction describes a world where the USA has lost its place as the most powerful nation on Earth. A coalition of South American nations

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Activision

DEVELOPER
Infinity Ward

PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1-16

AGE RATING
18+

WEBSITE
www.callofduty.com/ghosts

Trophies 51



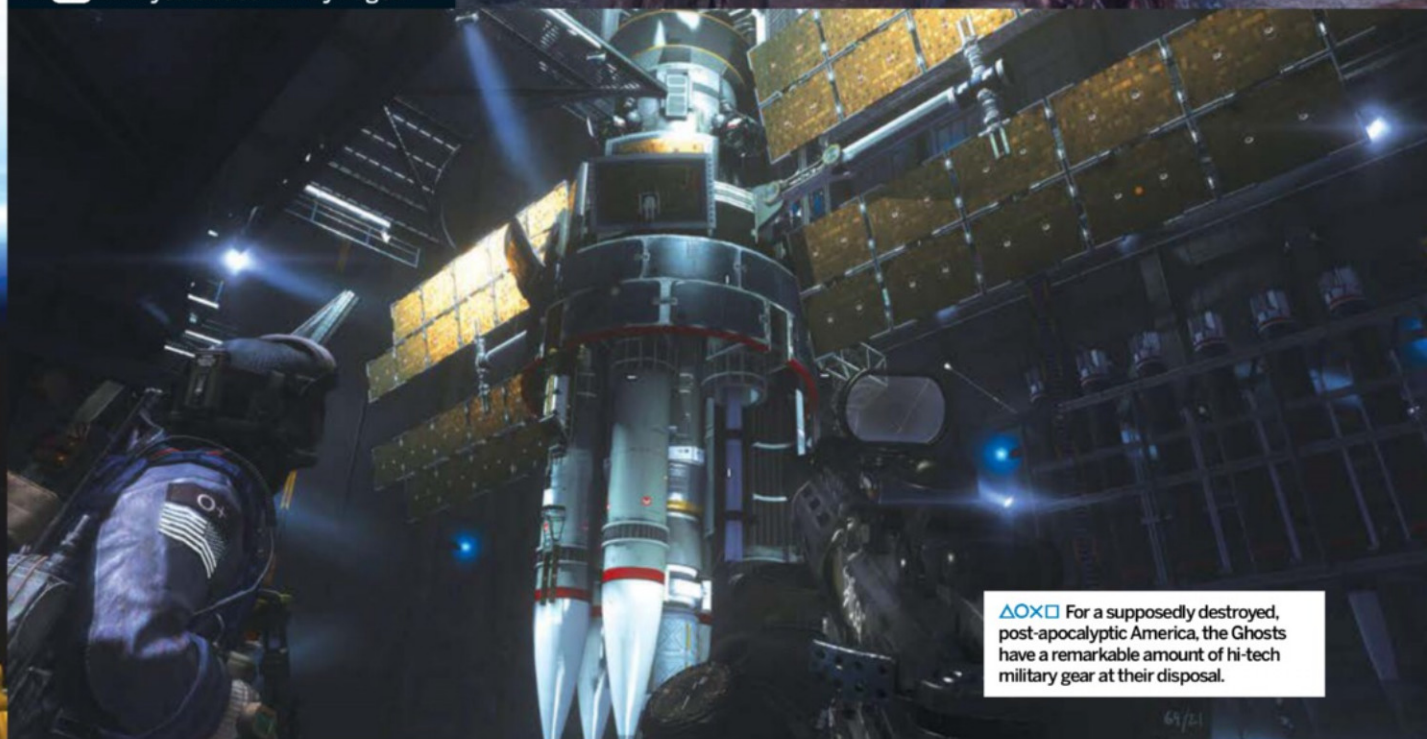


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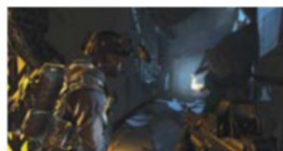
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ΔΟΧΔ For a supposedly destroyed, post-apocalyptic America, the Ghosts have a remarkable amount of hi-tech military gear at their disposal.



TROPHY CABINET



AUDIO-
PHILE

As usual, there are hidden intel files dotted around the campaign. Collect all 18 to earn this trophy.



YOU'VE
EARNED
IT

Finish the campaign on Veteran to earn this one. Honestly, after *World At War*, this will be a walk in the park.

named the Federation has taken control, bombarding the States with missile strikes from space and reducing them to a struggling force waging guerrilla warfare within its own borders.

At least, that's what the introduction describes. We then proceed to jet all over the world using a variety of weaponry and witness the full force of this supposedly weakened USA, including tanks, fighter jets, a huge bloody naval fleet and space stations. It's a waste of a setting that could have been an interesting departure for the series but instead ends up feeling like more of the same – perhaps not surprising when you consider the game was originally envisioned as *Modern Warfare 4*.

Players control Logan Walker, a member of the special forces Ghosts squad along with his father Elias and brother Hesh. Infinity Ward has made claims of the story exploring themes of family, but simply including family members in a story does not equate to the same thing. Logan is a silent



PS3 DIFFERENCES



CRISPY!

Running at 1080p resolution, the PS4 offers the cleanest version of *Ghosts* this side of a PC. You'll want a nice big TV to really see the improvement.

FISHY!

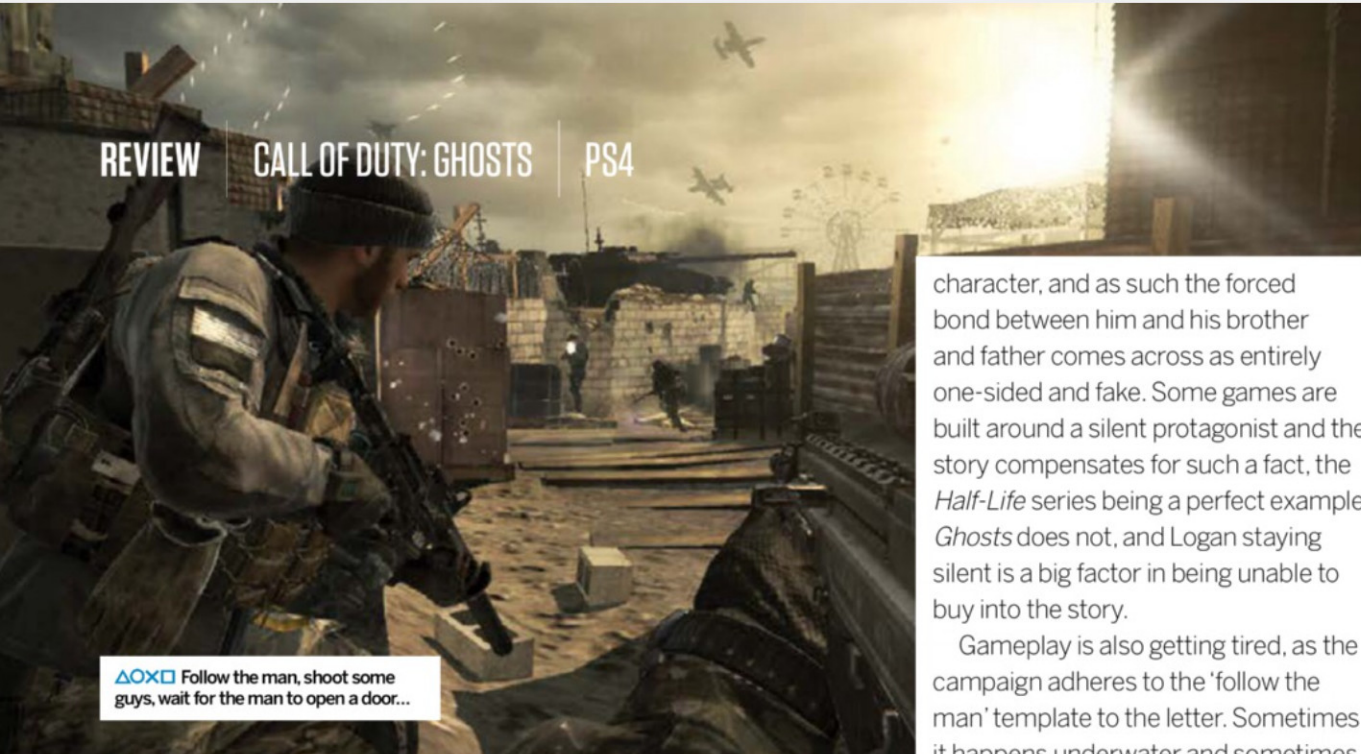
The next-gen versions of *Ghosts* include advanced AI for a number of things, including (bizarrely) the fish in the underwater stages of the campaign.

PRO SKILLS!

Don't forget, the PS4 allows you to share and stream your gameplay at the press of a button. Got a 25-kill streak? Now you can prove it.

SHINY!

The PS4 version of *Ghosts* has impressive lighting effects. It's not a huge leap, but it's definitely better looking than current-gen versions.



△○×□ Follow the man, shoot some guys, wait for the man to open a door...



△○×□ Extinction mode might seem similar to Left 4 Dead, but it's good fun.

character, and as such the forced bond between him and his brother and father comes across as entirely one-sided and fake. Some games are built around a silent protagonist and the story compensates for such a fact, the *Half-Life* series being a perfect example. *Ghosts* does not, and Logan staying silent is a big factor in being unable to buy into the story.

Gameplay is also getting tired, as the campaign adheres to the 'follow the man' template to the letter. Sometimes it happens underwater and sometimes it happens in space, but what you are doing never changes. Follow the man down a linear corridor, shoot some people, wait for the man to open the door to the next area and repeat. Sure, the shooting is as smooth and fun as ever, but the methods of delivering it to the player are getting old.

So, the single-player is disappointing, but criticising the campaign of a *Call Of Duty* game is an utterly pointless gesture. This is a series that now exists for the multiplayer, and in that respect it delivers as well as ever.

What can be said about *Call Of Duty* online that hasn't been already? It's still responsive, quick and fun, with a huge library of weapons and perks giving you an extra incentive to keep playing. Players can now customise the look of their character, finally including the

option of playing as a female soldier after years of waiting.

A bunch of new modes have been added, most of which are enjoyable. All seem to be even more fast-paced than usual, with some standouts being Grind, tasking the player with collecting dog tags from fallen foes and banking them at specific points on the map; Hunted, which starts everyone with a pistol before dropping weapons at random points on the map and Cranked, which powers you up briefly for every kill you get but also starts a 30-second timer. If you don't get another kill in that time, you explode. It can get pretty crazy.

All the new modes are good fun and the larger number of ways there is to play *Call Of Duty*, the better. Of course, a huge number of people won't give them a second glance and will stick to Team Deathmatch, but for those willing to diversify a little it's a great addition.

There's a huge batch of new weapons, perks, killstreak rewards and so on, with everything purchased with points earned as you play. A new category of guns – marksman rifles – bridges the gap between assault rifles and snipers, offering semi-automatic fire that rewards accurate aiming. Our favourite gun was the Honey Badger, a lethal little cross between SMG and assault rifle that also has a funny name. There's something out there for everyone.

Infinity Ward has also added two new modes, Squads and Extinction. Squads has been advertised as a mixture of solo and multiplayer with the player building up a team and setting them against others. The reality is a lot less enjoyable. Players can set the weapons and perks of their team, but that's as far as the customisation goes. They are then set against another team in Squad Vs Squad, with you and your team against another player and theirs.

Despite claims of the AI aping human behaviour in a believable manner, these are traditional bots; robotic and incapable of making a mistake. Playing against them is infuriating. Squads mode has been marketed as a new way of playing FPS games, but the truth is the complete opposite. This is simply multiplayer with bots instead of people. The one decent game type in Squads is Safeguard, a horde survival mode



△○×□ New stuff you unlock online is now bought with points.



△×□ Rapelling down the side of a skyscraper and sniping bad guys on each floor is one of the best moments of the solo campaign.

that is best played with friends and actually has little to do with the Squads concept. Otherwise, the mode is a large disappointment and feels unnecessary.

Extinction is more successful. Treyarch's *Call Of Duty* games have always been popular for their zombie modes, and Extinction seems like Infinity Ward's own take on the idea. Players team up to take on hordes of extraterrestrial nasties, slowly working their way through a map and taking out hives along the way before planting a nuke and getting out of there. Finishing the map takes around half an hour, and the fact that, unlike zombies, players can actually complete the mode gives them something concrete to aim towards.

The amount of depth involved is quite surprising. Players can choose one of four classes and customize their skills from a wide number of perks and items. Earning points as they kill alien scum, players spend them in game to buy ammo, armour and extra items such as turrets or gun drones. Skill points are also earned during the game, with players choosing how to level up and best help their team.

Extinction feels similar to *Left 4 Dead*, with a team of four moving through a series of maps and facing off against

relentless hordes of spooky monsters. It's good fun, if not revolutionary, and a worthwhile addition. The only downside is that the game will be shipping with only one Extinction map, and players will quickly tire of it. More maps are coming, but there is no doubt that you'll have to pony up some cash for them.

Ultimately *Call Of Duty: Ghosts* is more of the same, with a few small additions not enough to detract from the feeling that this is a series gradually growing stale. The single-player is rubbish, multiplayer is still very good, Squads is pointless and Extinction is fun. Above all, it's the same game we've been playing since 2007. Some will love it for exactly that while others will despise it for the same reason. Until *COD*'s dominance on multiplayer gaming starts to wane, don't expect anything else.

Sam Smith

VERDICT

It's not bad, but *Ghosts* can't escape from a growing feeling of déjà vu – we've definitely played this game before. How much longer can *COD* hang onto its FPS crown?

75%



PLAY CHALLENGE



SHARE THESE FEATS, IF YOU CAN...



WELCOME TO EARTH

△ CAN YOU COMPLETE Extinction mode on your own? It's hard enough with four people, so good luck.



A SPOOKY GHOST

□ FINISH A MULTIPLAYER game with at least ten kills and no deaths using only a knife. Done it yet? We doubt it.

Beaten our trials? Let us know @PlayMag_UK!



Knack

Sony's mascot is quite the relic

△○×□ Co-op mode has a second player controlling a metal Knack, but otherwise this is a single-player affair.



DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Sony

DEVELOPER

SCE Japan Studio

PRICE

£49.99

PLAYERS

1-2

AGE RATING

7+

Trophies 41



OPENING A CONSOLE

reveal with a game like *Knack* is a very brave move. In an era of military shooters and sports games, the classic launch platformer doesn't hold the same appeal it once did. Perhaps it's no coincidence that the first PS4 game we ever saw comes from the man responsible for creating the console itself, but is Sony's faith in its apparent new mascot misguided?

Written and directed by Mark Cerny, *Knack* has a considerable platforming heritage behind it – this is a man who has worked on *Sonic The Hedgehog*, *Crash Bandicoot* and *Spyro*, among others. At times it's easy to see the old-school influences in *Knack*, but as a whole it fails to bring the genre forward into a new generation.

Our titular hero is a being created by the friendly Doctor Vargas from the ancient relics that power human society, given a form and sentience after years of research. Being entirely composed

of these tiny stones, Knack can absorb relics to increase in size and power.

An initial training gauntlet will teach you everything you need to know, which is actually very little. This is quite a simple game, in theory: Knack can jump, punch, use a special attack when he collects enough 'sun stones' and dodge in any direction with a flick of the right stick. It's a simple control scheme, and it evolves little over the course of the game. With an emphasis on combat and a fixed camera that often views the action from above, *Knack* sometimes feels like a simplified *God Of War*.

The big surprise with *Knack* is how difficult it is. Don't let the child-friendly look fool you, as this is a game with some old-school sensibilities that will challenge even experienced players. Regardless of how big or little he is, Knack is never more than a couple of hits from death, resulting in every enemy being a serious threat if players get careless. Bizarre as it seems, it's similar to *Dark Souls*: every encounter requires the player's

full attention, regardless of the apparent danger or lack thereof. Knowing when to dodge is the key to success, and most foes have a tell before big attacks that gives the keen-eyed a chance to get out of the way in the nick of time.

Mastering combat and clearing out hordes of big enemies is satisfying to begin with, but it quickly grows stale and *Knack*'s big issue rears its head. The gameplay here is very one-note, evolving little through the 12-or-so hours of the campaign. The things you are doing in the first 30 minutes of *Knack* are the same things you'll be doing in the last stage – jumping, dodging and a spot of punching. Graphics aside, *Knack* could be a PS2 game to be honest. There is nothing here mechanically that wasn't possible before now.

Level design never evolves beyond a series of closed-off areas, with the exit opening once all enemies are beaten. The scenery may change, but the repetitive design and some uninspiring environments lead to stages that feel



ΔOX□ Finding hidden gadget parts is another feature that feels sadly under-developed.



dull. Occasional changes in pace, such as Knack absorbing wood or ice, or turning invisible to bypass laser beams, are never capitalised on and don't do enough to change the gameplay.

Knack may grow and shrink as he gains and loses parts, but this isn't a free, organic process. The player is always the size the game wants them to be, the extreme linearity of the levels making sure you never get too big too quickly. Even when huge, nothing really changes, as the enemies you are fighting grow to match you. Knack feels a tad weightier as he grows but otherwise he controls exactly the same. The result is, despite being enormous, that you never really feel as such.

There's definitely a level of next-gen sheen to *Knack's* graphics but otherwise this is a surprisingly average-looking game. Compared to the beauty of *Killzone*, there is little we can see in *Knack* that couldn't feasibly be recreated on PS3. The game even suffers slowdown on occasion when dealing with the many tiny parts of Knack flying about, showcasing the impressive but entirely superfluous particle effects at work.

The story feels childish and throwaway, disappointing but perhaps not unexpected considering the game's apparent target audience. This is a cartoon world of good and evil, simple characters and plot twists that you can see coming a mile off. It's unoriginal and uninvolved, if never outright bad. Children should take to it far more than us jaded adults, and that's sort of the point really. Probably.

With little replay value beyond unlocking harder difficulties and battling through a basic arena mode, it's hard to recommend *Knack* as a must-have for those picking up a PS4. *Knack's*



ΔOX□ Despite a decent number of levels, some are left feeling dull.

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

f Knack looks like the natural evolution of the platforming genre: fun and addictive.

Bradley Alexander Fisher

f has a lot of potential to be big, but I have a feeling it might not be. Still, I'm interested

Dean Welsh

f looks like a kids game, not interested really.

Leslie Steven

Knack is basically the closest thing to a next-gen Crash game we will ever get.

@BryonRollins

Boring kids game. What were Sony thinking making this the first thing they showed?

@shaneomacattack

Can't wait to play it... when it becomes free on PS Plus, lol

@rich111

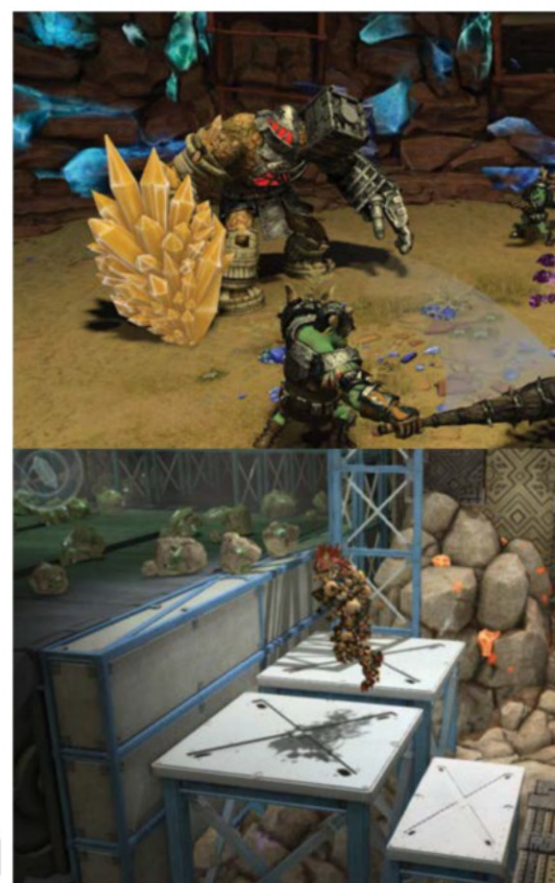
design is stuck in the era it seems to have come from, an era of cuddly platformer mascots that sold millions of games. The times have changed, but *Knack* has unfortunately not moved with them. It's fun at times, with satisfying, simple combat, but there just isn't enough here to reach that next level of quality. Remember *Kameo*? *Blinx: The Time Sweeper*? Exactly. Unless Sony is determined to make *Knack* a franchise, we can't help but wonder if it's doomed to the same fate.

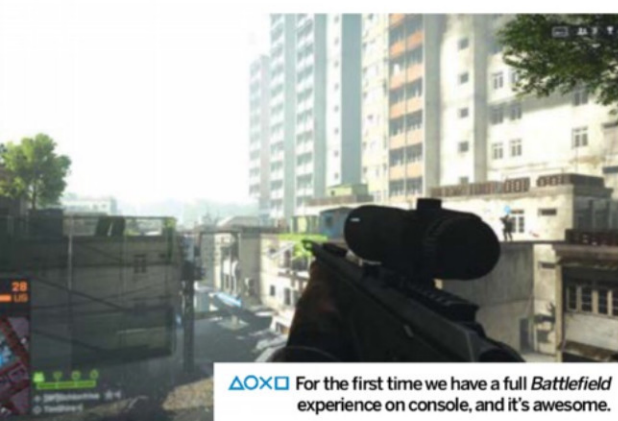
Sam Smith

VERDICT

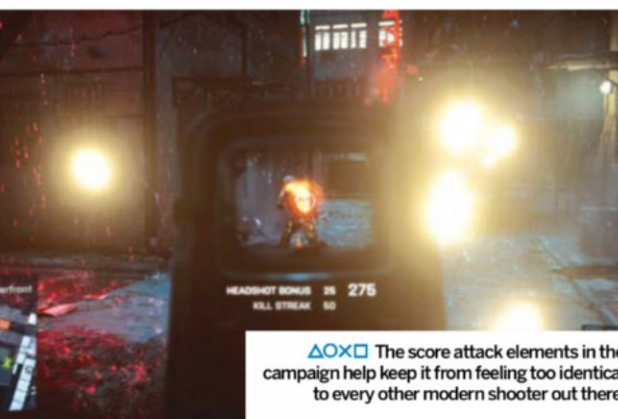
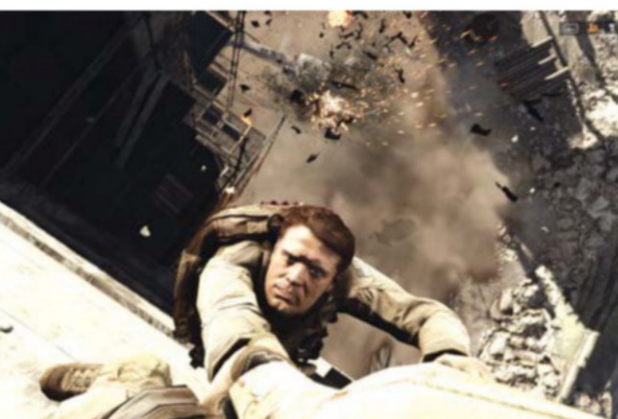
While never truly bad, *Knack's* simple gameplay and dull level design make it tough to recommend. If you can find it cheap it's worth a bash, but there are better launch games out there.

55%





△OX□ For the first time we have a full *Battlefield* experience on console, and it's awesome.



△OX□ The score attack elements in the campaign help keep it from feeling too identical to every other modern shooter out there.

Battlefield 4

This is the dawn of a Revolution



BATTLEFIELD SEEMS TO have been suffering an identity crisis. *Battlefield 3* felt as if it had been developed for the purpose

of competing with *Call Of Duty*, with a terrible solo campaign and smaller scale multiplayer. *Battlefield 4* occasionally suffers with similar issues, mainly in single-player, but also seems to have reclaimed some of the unique personality that set the series apart to begin with.

Yes, there is once again a single-player campaign and yes, once again it feels very similar to *Call Of Duty* – Hollywood bombast with big explosions and real American heroes. This time it's a dastardly Chinese warmonger posing the threat, although the story never takes the time to slow down and really explain what's going on. Sounds familiar, huh? The story is nonsense, as usual, and some very good actors (including *The Wire*'s Michael K Williams) are wasted on typically rubbish writing. Of course, just like its competitor, criticising the single-player story is utterly pointless – people are buying this for the multiplayer.

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
EA

DEVELOPER
DICE

PRICE
£49.99

PLAYERS
1-64

AGE RATING
18+

Trophies 43



A score attack mechanic permeates the campaign, players getting points for each kill and more for headshots, killstreaks and other fancy methods of murder. These points all go towards a total score for the level, and players can achieve one of three ranks at the end to unlock extra guns and goodies. It's a neat idea that sets the story apart from the horde of other modern military shooters, making it feel that little more like a game. However, earning the top rank on each mission seems remarkably easy, and simply making sure to kill every enemy in a relatively decent time will usually be enough to achieve that gold medal. Still, it's an entertaining concept and a fun throwback to the arcade games of yore.

Otherwise, the single-player is forgettable and bland, but who cares? Multiplayer is how *Battlefield* made its name in the first place and multiplayer is why people will be buying this one. *Battlefield 3* on console suffered from a lack of power in comparison to its PC cousin, with ugly graphics and reduced players per match a result. The current-gen versions of *Battlefield 4* suffer the same problems but, for the first time, the next-generation editions seem to be almost on par with the PC benchmark.

Sure, it's never going to look quite as good, but *Battlefield 4* on PS4 is still stunning, with the Frostbite engine pumping out some incredible views and special effects. Best of all, matches now support the full 64-player experience that makes *Battlefield* so great in the first place – all out war, online.

Battlefield has always been larger in scale than most shooters, with huge maps that take a long time to traverse. To ease your transportation are several drivable vehicles, from jeeps and tanks to fighter jets and helicopters. Most vehicles can carry more than one person, with one piloting and others taking up turret positions or riding shotgun – literally.

SECOND SCREEN

Twice the screens, twice the Battlefield

MAPS!
Players can use their tablet or smartphone as a real-time map, tracking the game and the players as the match progresses.

COMMANDER MODE!
Commander Mode can also be entirely played on the second screen with touch controls, if someone else is hogging the TV.

LOADOUTS!
You can also edit your loadouts on the app, with any changes made being reflected the next time you play the game.

PLATOONS!
Manage your Platoon (basically a clan), assign ranks to members, create your own unique emblem and much more besides.





△OX□ Just stick a plaster on it buddy, you'll be fine!



△OX□ You can still pinch people's dog tags in *Battlefield 4*, great for embarrassing people online.



△OX□ You'll fly all over the world in the single-player, although we still aren't sure why.

It's as fun as ever, and made even better by the addition of 'Levolution', widely destructible environments that have drastic effects on the map. The now-famous example is of a collapsing skyscraper, destroying the land surrounding it and anyone in the immediate vicinity. Perhaps the best is a map set around an enormous dam. Destroy the dam and the stage floods, changing the layout of the map and the complexion of the game. Some maps see more use of the feature than others, but it's another welcome addition that doesn't detract from the excellent gameplay at all.

Otherwise it's mainly business as usual, with a bunch of returning game modes and the same four player Classes, enhanced with new weapons and abilities. Commander Mode also makes a welcome return. This enables one player to view the map from a top-down perspective and issue orders to their team as the battle progresses. It's a fun side-attraction that switches things up, and calling in missile strikes to save your guys makes you feel like a hero. Indeed, *Battlefield 4* feels like a more social game than its competitors.

Players need to work together to succeed, and playing with friends is the best way to experience it.

Ultimately, which brand of online shooting you prefer comes down to personal preference, but *Battlefield 4* seems that bit more fresh and fun compared to this year's *Call Of Duty*. The larger maps hold more variation in how to tackle objectives and driving vehicles is a simple thrill that never gets old. *Battlefield 4* feels like more of a 'true' *Battlefield* game when compared to its predecessor, aping that sandbox arena fun that made *1942* such a hit. Thanks to the power of PlayStation 4, we finally have a PC *Battlefield* experience on a home console, and it's pretty darn good.

Sam Smith

VERDICT

A naff single-player campaign and great multiplayer component combine to create the complete *Battlefield* experience on console, and it's right good fun.

80%

REVIEW

LEGO MARVEL SUPER HEROES

PS4



△×○ You won't play another game in which Hulk sweeps up after making a mess...

Lego Marvel Super Heroes

Avengers, assembled



DETAILS

PUBLISHER

Warner Bros

DEVELOPER

TT Games

PRICE

£49.99

PLAYERS

1-2

INSTALL SIZE

6.5 GB

AGE RATING

7+

TWITTER

@TTGames

Trophies 46



ALSO ON PS3

LOVE IT OR hate it, the *Lego* series is yet to put a flat, empty foot wrong. But still, it's not like every one of the games is on the

same level – the quality of the games isn't dictated by anything TT Games does per se, rather by how good a fit the IP is for the tried and tested *Lego* game template. And despite a few close calls over the last few years, this is easily the best fusion of subject and formula yet, with the Amazing, the Fantastic, the Uncanny and the Incredible coming together for the most feature-packed and creative *Lego* game to date.

While it plays heavily on the movie angle with Iron Man, Hulk, Thor and Spidey taking centre stage for the most part, the true joy of *Lego Marvel* is how spectacularly wide it casts the net. Most of the story predictably follows Marvel's

biggest names, but the extras here aren't Stormtrooper 2 or That Other Hobbit – virtually all of its 100-plus character cast is a hero or villain from the Marvel roster that has been begging for a spotlight moment for years. The downside to this is that the stars get all the good stuff – bespoke animations and decent dialogue lines – while the underdogs merely exist. That'll be enough for some of their fans but still, it'd have been nice for this to have been a proper celebration of all things Marvel rather than an 'Avengers And Friends' shindig where the big boys get all the stage time as always.

Still, this is something that the side missions do a lot to try and make amends for, and do so pretty well to be fair. Once the story is done, there's a procession of B-listers waiting in the wings for their go. These extra missions are something only the truest of believers will get to,

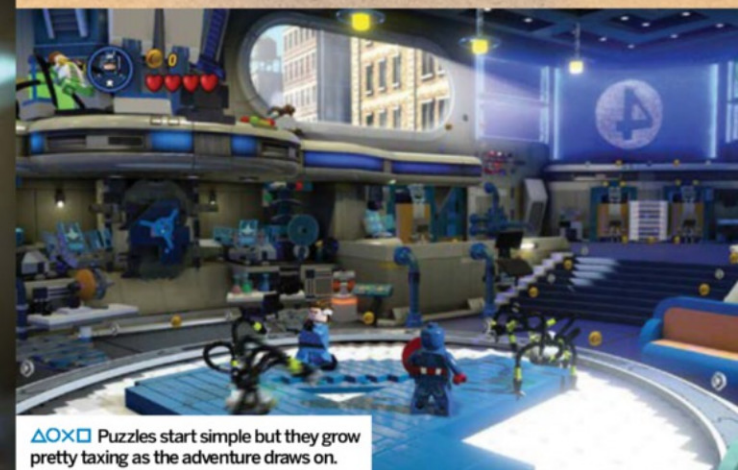
mind – each is locked behind a Gold Brick paywall and you'll struggle to bring home even 50 of the 250 shiny rewards over the course of the story (extra missions unlock every 25), making exploration and replaying old stages with new powers crucial to extracurricular success.

During missions, it's *Lego*-by-numbers – switch between characters and abilities to traverse levels and solve basic puzzles before applying the same logic to combat in order to beat the inevitable end-of-stage boss. The Marvel difference comes in the form of power variety – each of the cast has such a mix of the various abilities that there's usually one character who can single-handedly solve an entire puzzle. And with so many incidental challenges scattered around, there's all the more reason to expand your roster in the hope that you'll unlock a better fit for one of the many trials that await.

“YOU'RE LOOKING AT 40-PLUS HOURS TO DO EVERYTHING AND GET YOUR PLATINUM”



△OX□ The visual fidelity of the PS4 version makes toys look just like the real things.



And while it might not be the kind of photorealistic extravaganza you might expect from next-gen hardware, *Lego Marvel* looks amazing. Crisp, clean 1080p visuals elevate it above the PS3 version, plus there are less issues with draw distance and pop-in on PS4. Like with *Skylanders*, there's a curious thrill to seeing the toys play around on TV as they really look rather than as close approximations – again, it may not be the visual leap the hardware is capable of but it's tough to imagine how a game about Lego toys adventuring around a city could look much better.

Outside of the crazy vast map of *ACIV*, it's hard to point out a game that offers better single-player value on PS4 – exploring the whole map and clearing up all of the unlockables is no small task, so you're looking at a good 40-plus hours of game time to do everything and get your Platinum. Factor in that doing so is a blast in co-op as well (though there's still no online co-op, sadly) and you've got your family-friendly game of choice for

WHAT YOU'RE SAYING...

f I've played the demo of *Lego Marvel* and can't wait to get it on PS4

Mark Threlfall

f Lego games are basically the best implementation of 'silly buggers.' Now with added wolverine. Sold.

James Archbold

f Not interested in Lego

Tony Davies

Twitter Ah Lego. The building blocks of video gaming. You know I've gotta hand it to them they really do know how to get the job done.

@Adam_Anouer

Twitter If *Lego Marvel* isn't the greatest game ever created than I will solely be responsible for the Rapture. Its those gold bricks!

@G4MERGOD

Twitter never been too interested in lego before but this one looks really awesome

@alphamantaur

any household that isn't keen on buying new toys to unlock more gameplay.

There's a good reason why TT Games hasn't announced its next subject for blockification yet – after nailing this formula perfectly, the studio will surely have to evolve the franchise and branch out in order for it to be as successful in this new generation as it was in the last. A cracking start, then, but it needs to change soon. As *Amazing*, *Fantastic* and *Incredible* as this may be, the blocks are starting to fade ever-so-slightly and if the team isn't careful, this could be the last truly great build it gets out of them.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

Marvel's all-encompassing cast makes this the best *Lego* game yet. It might not be a showpiece for PS4 hardware but it's a brilliant family-friendly videogame all the same.

85%

△OX□ Your friendly neighbourhood Spider-Man in all his blocky glory. Venom is still cooler...



Need For Speed: Rivals

Ghosts Games hits the ground running on all cylinders



THE UNFORTUNATE ABSENCE of *DriveClub* from the PS4 launch line-up had the potential to trip racing fans up as

they shifted into the new generation, but thanks to Ghost Games – a new studio that's made up predominantly of former Criterion Games employees – the new hardware is burning rubber from day one. And we're not talking in the sense that the PS4 ticks a box by simply having a game where you get to drive cars – far from it – as not only is *Rivals* a racing experience that holds its own against the current cream of the crop, it pulls it off with more than a hint of flair.

Rather than the top ten toppling antics of *Need For Speed: Most Wanted*, *Rivals* subscribes to the race and chase dynamic that Criterion last explored with *Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit*. This means that in addition to speeding from point-to-point as you aim for pole position in a straight-up race, you can also get behind

the wheel of a tricked-out cop car as you try to bring the renegade racers to justice. But whichever side you choose, the draw of unlocking increasingly faster cars by completing a wide variety of challenges is equally compelling – especially when the open world is tailor-made for sweeping drifts and soaring past 200mph.

Unlike the urban architecture of Fairhaven City, Redview County brings the focus back to the motorways and B-roads. The level of congestion has been substantially reigned in, and there are times where you'll drive through whole stretches of road without coming across a single law-abiding citizen. You still have to weave between traffic in the busier areas, but when you crash in *Rivals*, it's more likely to be the work of a racer or copper rather than a family hatchback that you failed to see while boosting through a blind bend. You also have to be mindful of the reinstated Pursuit and Evasion Tech that includes EMP blasts and road blocks.

One way in which *Rivals* stands out is with risk/reward dynamic of the progression system. You earn Speed Points by doing pretty much anything, and the longer you remain in the game world, the higher your Speed Point multiplier will climb. But if you fail to bank your points at a racer Hideout or a police Command Post before you get wrecked or busted, you'll lose the lot. Combine this luck-pushing mentality with the game's strong multiplayer component and you end up with an intense driving experience – one where the difference between success and failure can hang on your last unbeaten panel as you dash towards your base.

It's possible to play the game as a solo venture, one where you pick an assignment route – usually there's a choice of three – before completing the required events and challenges. This will

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
EA

DEVELOPER
Ghost Games

PRICE
£59.99

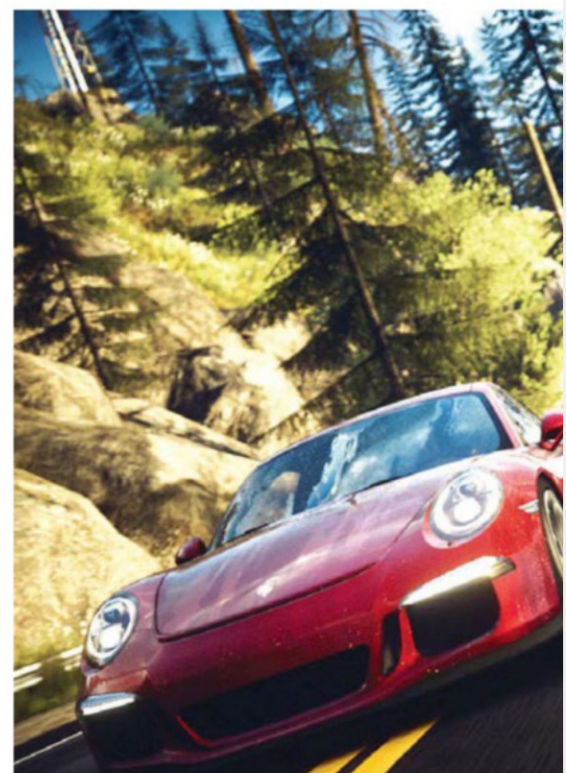
PLAYERS
1-6

AGE RATING
7+

Trophies 26



△○×□ Racers can activate a risky Turbo ability that pushes the car to dangerous speeds.





△×□ With the right customisation parts, even the classic cars can be given a competitive edge.



△×□ The license plates all say Ghost by default. Could this be a cross-promotion with Activision? Unlikely...

progress the space-filling story forward as you fill the garage with customisable racer rides and a wide selection of pre-modified cop cars. But to get the most out of *Rivals*, you really have to share an online game with five other players. This lets you undertake racing and chasing events as separate teams, or if you just happen to drive past another player while they're evading the law or hunting a racer, you can get involved without so much as touching a menu screen.

Ghost Games calls this the AllDrive system. It sounds a bit 4x4 on paper but it basically means the solo and multiplayer moments can seamlessly transition back and forth. Aside from this technical upgrade, the racing physics and event composition are similar to what we've seen in past *Need For Speed* games, but with it, *Rivals* delivers a style of racing that feels much more connected. And considering how accomplished the series is at making you feel like a speed demon in the first place, we commend the team for building upon the game in a meaningful way as opposed to tampering with something that didn't need fixing.

It'd be disingenuous not to mention the graphical fidelity, and suffice to say, it's impressive. Whether you're power-drifting in the Ferrari 458 Spider or hammering the straights in a Ford Mustang, the true 1080p resolution and steady 30fps frame rate paints a slick picture with impressive draw distances. It also makes us wonder how far Ghost Games and Polyphony Digital will push the new hardware in the coming years, but for now, *Rivals* gives racing fans an extremely compelling reason to upgrade their console. And even if driving into oncoming traffic isn't your thing, it's still one of the best PlayStation 4 launch titles.

Matt Edwards

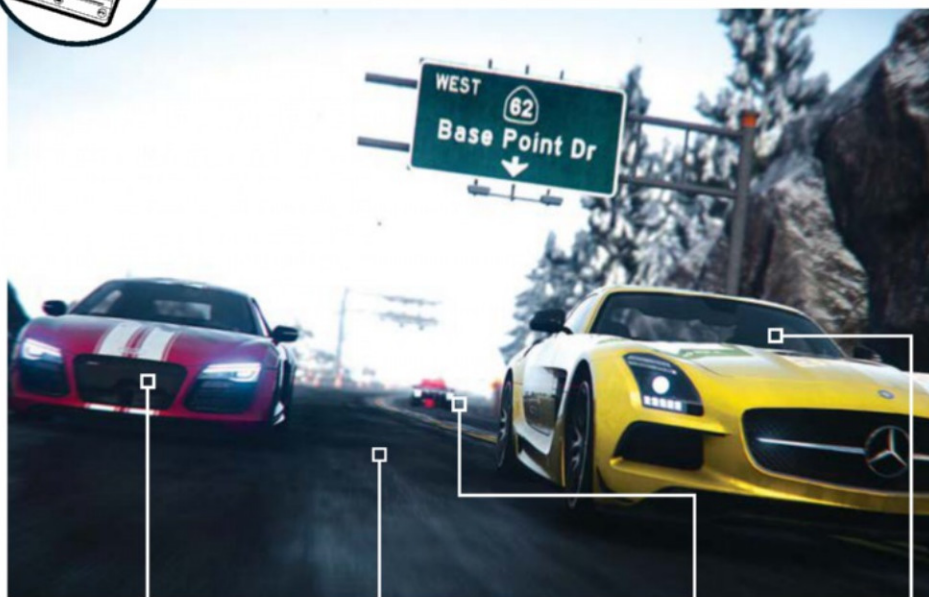
VERDICT

It may not be a PS4 exclusive or even a game that was designed specifically for next-gen hardware, but that doesn't stop *Rivals* from being an engaging and deeply rewarding racing game.

83%



PS3 DIFFERENCES



TRIGGER HAPPY

It's a small thing, but the revised triggers on the DualShock 4 are far more satisfying to squeeze when you're accelerating and braking.

RESOLUTION

While the PlayStation 3 version upscales the visual fidelity to 1080p, the PlayStation 4 uses it as a native resolution by default. It's very shiny.

HORIZONS

All that extra processing power in the PS4 means that you can see the dodgy Sunday drivers coming from a much greater distance.

CONTROLS

There are currently no steering wheels available for the PlayStation 4, so that's one way in which the old tech wins here. Better get used to the pad...



Skylanders Swap Force

A game of 32 halves



NEVER INVITE A

Skylander to dinner. Blame it on their mythical heritage, their lack of common knowledge

about modern civilised society, but basically, if you want to call in a Skylander to come save your home from evil monsters or protect your ancient magical deities, you should know that they're definitely going to wreck the place and take your stuff. Sure, they'll get the job done, because what kind of legendary heroes would they be if they didn't? But they'll also definitely smash up any barrels, crates and other containers for the glittering treasure you've squirrelled away inside them. And then they'll spend it on fancy new powers, which will be used at least in part for breaking more of your things. So your village isn't on fire any more, and that's nice, but you'll have dropped

several places in the global economy. Skylanders love smashing shit up. It's something to consider.

With eight new movement types to combine with the eight existing element types, there are now more Skylander combinations than ever before. And just like the previous games, you can't play through every bit of it without owning/borrowing all of the types. There's definitely an argument to be made here that this is a crazy expense, but you *can* get through the main content of the game with just the one lonesome Skylander, and previous characters do still work on the new Portal. And like so much of *Skylanders*, like locked doors that require two elements of Skylander to open and extra arenas for group training, it's obviously designed to be played co-op.

Also like the previous games, you get your little *Skylanders* figures, slap 'em down on the Portal Of Power and

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Activision

DEVELOPER
Vicarious Visions

PRICE
£64.99

PLAYERS
1-2

AGE RATING
7+

Trophies 40



“FOR ALL ITS FANCY MAGNETIC TOP-AND-BOTTOM-SWITCHING GIZMOLOGY, SKYLANDERS IS RATHER TRADITIONAL”



△○×□ The voice acting somehow manages to be child-friendly without being cloying, but maybe we were just mesmerised by the doom-shrieky tones of *Invader Zim*'s Richard Horvitz.



△○×□ If you want more of a challenge, there are some tricky optional objectives.



△○×□ The mini-games do have clumsy controls, but they're not entirely broken.



△○×□ Having a good range of Swap Force Skylanders will get expensive.



△○×□ Unless you have a mix of types, it's impossible to explore everywhere.



you're good to go. The more Swap Force Skylanders you buy, the more combinations you can make – with 256 characters in total – by switching around their magnetic top and bottom halves. The swapping mechanic itself is good fun, to the point where we put together a squid-faced guy with rocket boots and that was it. He's done. No more switching for him. Change the tops and bottoms of the other guys if you like, but Captain Hotboots von Tentacleface is our main guy.

Still, for all its fancy magnetic top-and-bottom-switching gizmology, *Skylanders* is rather traditional. The story is once again about foiling Kaos' evil plans for the corruption of Skylands, this time through his freshly invented Evilizer gun. It runs on petrified darkness and instantly turns anything it's fired at into a purple and neon pink version of itself. And, in a *Skylanders* theme we're starting to get, things can be de-evilised by smacking 'em. It's good silly, but it isn't doing much that's new. You explore the levels, in which you'll have one main objective, all the while investigating the places it looks like you might be able to open up mini-games and find collectables. Despite the very, very occasional piece of inventiveness often found in the mini-games like brief 2D platforming in silhouette, it's all very much the same as before, levels requiring little in the

way of puzzle-solving or lateral thinking. Although now you can jump, albeit badly.

That's not to say the jumping thing isn't welcome – even floaty, horribly inaccurate jumping – but it's in a sort of 'Well, of *course* you should be able to jump' kind of way. For a next-gen game, *Swap Force* should be doing a lot more. Invisible walls should be a thing of the past by now; it's infuriating having mechanics like jumping across stepping stones only available to you when the game decides: 'Yes, you can jump here. No, you can't jump there. Yes, it looks exactly the same, shut up and do as you're told.' And exploring an area only to have a gate lock forever behind you is frustrating. There are so many ideas of experimentation and exploration with the creative mix of eight types and eight movement modes, but the actual amount of freedom is frustratingly limited and probably the result of designing it for two generations of console.

Kids probably won't notice this so much, though, and it's here where a review by an adult for a game marketed to children gets difficult. For every invisible wall that would infuriate an older gamer, there'll be a littl' un who'd be delighted by just being able to bounce joyfully around the landscape. Branching across both audiences is the fact that there is a neat progression/levelling system, and a great replayability. Collectables are everywhere, from

the hundreds of hats to the slightly questionable inclusion of tokens that advertise/inform you of all the Swap Force Skylanders that can be purchased.

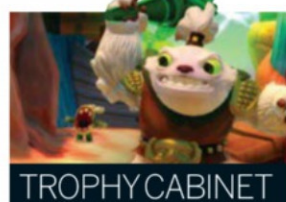
While younger gamers will probably play through with a selection of Skylanders, playing with friends and swapping them out as they die (sorry, "get tired"), older gamers will find a lot more enjoyment to be found in choosing one or two and being a little more tactical in their progression through the game. The gameplay is formulaic but not dull; you'll learn a mechanic then learn to master it, and though there is a set stockpile of enemies, their abilities get increasingly more technically challenging as you progress. *Swap Force* might not have the most precise of controls on occasion, but the beautiful world, the excellent *POTC*-lite score and the sheer sense of fun makes up for it. So maybe you can come to the party, *Skylanders*, just smarten yourself up a bit. And don't go trashing our stuff, you hear?

Rebecca Richards

VERDICT

Despite how much fun it is to play with friends, and how delightful it can be to explore the world with your freaky little characters, we expect that little bit more from a next-gen game.

77%



TROPHY CABINET

PUPPET MASTER FOUNDED This Trophy is for defeating our favourite boss, Mesmerelda. The optional objective of not getting hurt while you fight on this one is ridiculously hard.



SLINGS AND ARROWS If you finish the main quest, there's loads of extra stuff to do, like stomping your way through the Team Survival Arena. Complete the first level to bag this Trophy.

FOR FANS OF...

LEGO MARVEL SUPER HEROES With a "Come on team, let's go!" vibe, *Swap Force* is also great to play with friends.

Resogun

Save the last humans

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
Sony

DEVELOPER
Housemarque

PRICE
£9.99 (free on PS Plus)

PLAYERS
1-2

INSTALL SIZE
500 MB

AGE RATING
7+

TWITTER
@housemarque

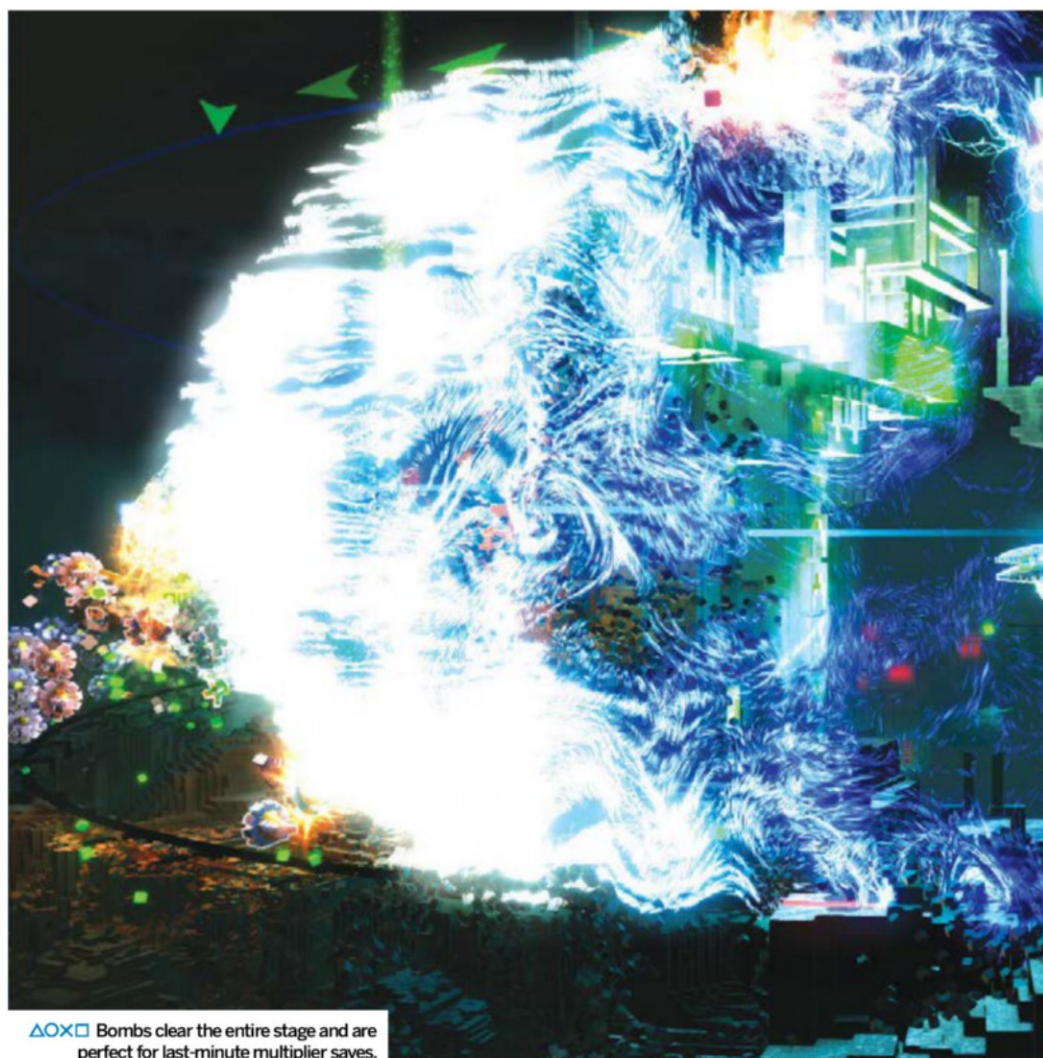
Trophies 34



HAVING EXPERIENCED THE awful, tinny sound effects that screech forth from the Wii Remote,

we weren't entirely convinced about the idea of having a speaker built into the DualShock 4. We're still not, if we're entirely honest. But *Resogun* presents an interesting argument for its inclusion, namely the fact that the little speaker seems to be some kind of brain control device – it keeps telling us to 'save the last humans' and every time we find ourselves powerless to resist.

So if you plan on picking up *Resogun* along with any other games, the smart advice is to get the other games out of the way first – once *Resogun* is in the picture, all you're going to hear is 'save the last humans' until it's time for bed. Then you're going to hear it for another few hours, then pass out on the sofa. This is one of the most addictive games we've ever played, a score-attack shooter so incredibly well designed and crafted that you could be chasing a new



△○×□ Bombs clear the entire stage and are perfect for last-minute multiplier saves.

high score until your last day on this planet and still love every second of it.

With three ships, four difficulty levels and five stages, it doesn't seem like there's much to *Resogun* on paper. And even though you can blast your way to the credits in a couple of hours, anyone that calls this a short game is missing the point so violently that they deserve to have their gaming privileges revoked. Every permutation of ship, difficulty and stage presents a very different challenge, with personal play-styles and wave manipulation altering things further still. Chasing a high score never feels like going through the motions, either. Even though waves of enemies seem fixed in how and where they will appear, even the slightest of detours around the cylindrical stage will see the rest of your run pan out in a different way.

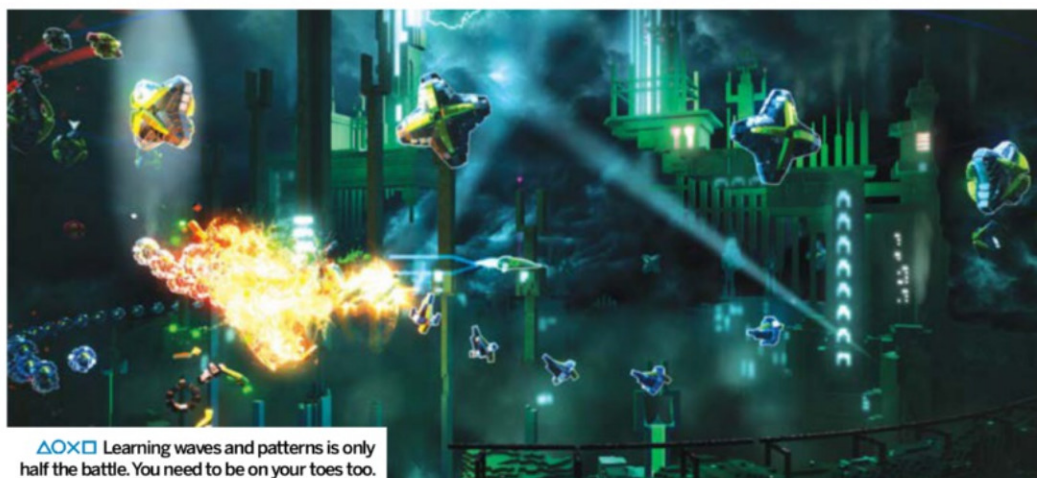
It's amazing just how much each of the three ships change how you need to play, too. The stock ship is your classic all-rounder, with no glaring weaknesses or pronounced strengths and is a great starting point. Those looking to diversify can plump for either a focus on mobility or firepower with the remaining two – the former sacrifices weapon strength for speed and boost recovery, making it more about charging headlong through

packs of enemies to destroy them, while the gunship is an experts-only beast that makes short work of enemies but can easily find itself trapped or outrun. It's too early to call but there doesn't seem to be a 'best' ship, making your own play-style the most important factor in deciding which to go with. Try all three and you'll soon settle on a favourite.

△○×□ On Master difficulty, enemies release bullets when killed. Which means it gets crazy.



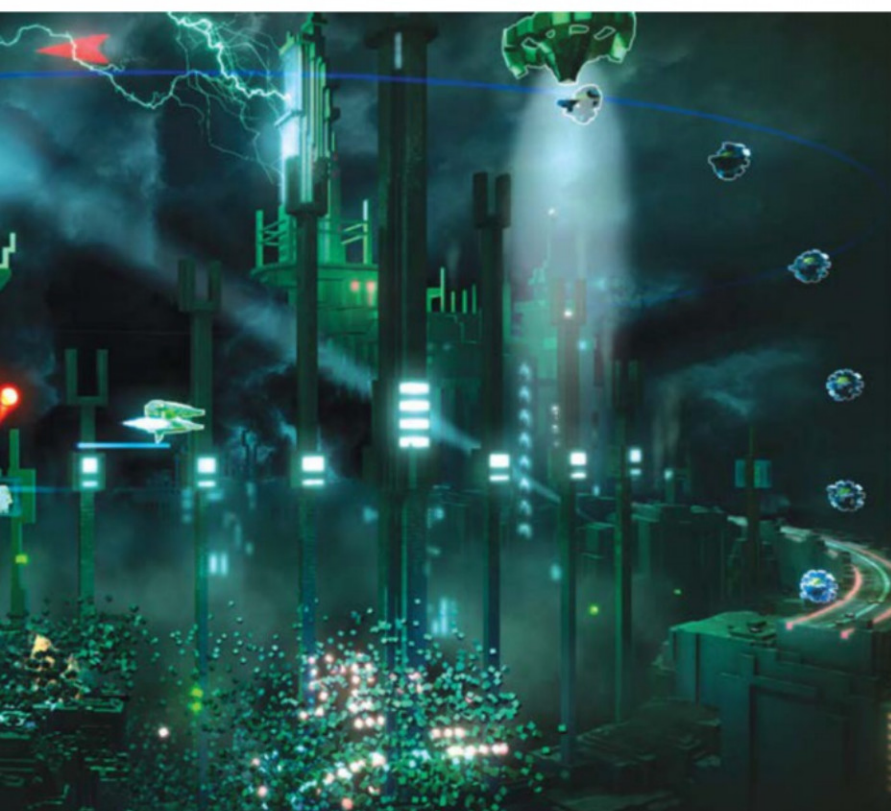
△○×□ The end-of level pyro display is hands down the game's most impressive moment.



△○×□ Learning waves and patterns is only half the battle. You need to be on your toes too.



△○×□ Saving all ten humans is immensely rewarding – you won't settle for anything less.



The act of saving the last humans is actually tougher than it seems because even though all ten of the little guys are sat in glass boxes in the background, setting them free and guiding them to safety is an art that must be mastered. Wave after wave of enemies fills the stage and occasionally, as announced by the nice computer lady, a special wave will appear. Shoot down all of these foes and a human will be released, but allow even one to escape and the human is executed, immediately crippling your bonus for the level and probably making the nice computer lady sad – whether due to not wanting to let her down or just because of our crushing perfectionism, we'd usually restart at this point. Still, once a human is released, they're still not saved. UFOs will come to kill off any escapees, meaning you've got to quickly pick them up and deliver them to one of the stage's exit points. Juggling release, protection and escort duties gets crazy frantic as the difficulty ramps up, but that just makes sending all ten little dudes home all the sweeter.

Resogun's voxel visuals are striking and slick, particularly once you start to notice the little details. The blocks from which enemy ships are built litter the floor of the stage as you decimate

their ranks, plus the OTT end-of-level explosion is one of the flashiest things your TV will ever have the honour of broadcasting. And no matter how frantic things get, the frame rate never so much as stutters – the smooth 60fps is rock solid and, coupled with a thumping soundtrack, really cements *Resogun* as an aesthetic delight.

Not that you'll even care, considering that the score mechanics, upgrade system and human-saving craziness are all knit tightly enough together that this would still be an outstanding game if the visuals were just black boxes on a white background. But they're not. They're *beautiful*. And whichever way you slice it, *Resogun* is a glorious score attack game and the perfect way for new PS4 owners to learn just how awesome PlayStation Plus really is. Essential.

Luke Albigés

VERDICT

Shiny, intelligent and near enough impossible to put down, *Resogun* is the clear PlayStation 4 launch highlight for us. Save the last humans? Don't mind if we do. Forever.

91%

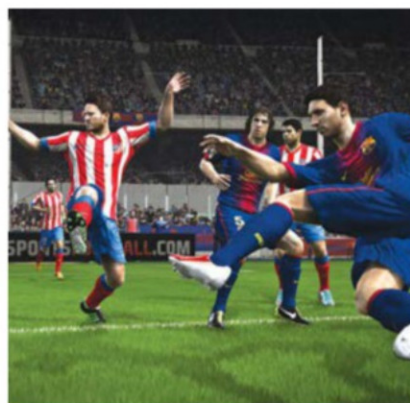


PS4 LAUNCH ROUND-UP



ASSASSIN'S CREED IV: BLACK FLAG

Traditional land-based AC antics came as something of a disappointment gameplay-wise – autopilot platforming and easy-mode combat both return – but *Black Flag* more than makes up for it by letting you be a proper pirate with a proper pirate ship and everything. It's all a bit familiar until you actually get to take charge of a ship, and then it's all about surprisingly fun and tactical boat-based combat and freedom of exploration of the vast ocean-based world. Yarrrr, and so on.



FIFA 14

Holy wow, it's the football! Looking completely different in its next-gen shininess... okay, it's still the football, pretty much the same as it ever was. Only yes, it's much shinier. It's all about realism for *FIFA* on PS4; the new Ignite Engine makes players look more like people and less like surprised potatoes, as well as giving them more 'realistic' personalities and movement on the field. Gameplay also feels totally different to the PS3 rendition. If you like the football, then this football is better football. Hooray for the football.



MADDEN NFL 25

No, in case you were wondering, it's not 2025. You know, because usually EA does the *Madden* series by the year? Only this time it's a 25th anniversary thing? Ah, whatever. Point of interest: hats will be far shinier. Yes, that is a genuine selling point. Oh, and the physics and tracking and reactions are all greatly improved, but we don't really care about that when there are so many shiny football hats to discuss. Just like *FIFA*, die-hard fans get to see their favourite sport in glorious 1080p, which will be more than enough for them.



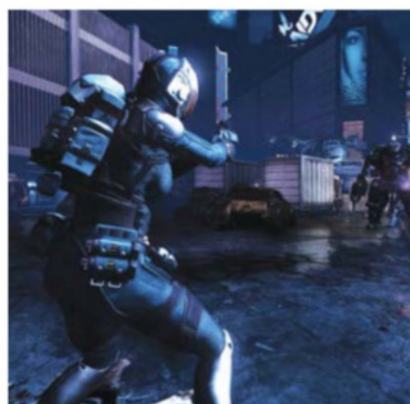
CONTRAST

A quirky platformer/puzzler with something of a *BioShock*-lite, noir setting, you play as a girl's (sort of) invisible companion with the rather useful power to become your own shadow and make your way around a 2D shadow-based environment. There are some interesting mechanics here, and a couple of great puzzles, but it's too floaty and buggy to be much more than a briefly intriguing PS Plus freebie. Still, it's an enjoyable little dip into something more creative than all the games about the shooting or kicking of stuff.



NBA 2K14

American football, basketball... Where are the cricket and lacrosse games? That's what we want to know. Actually, that sounds rubbish; maybe this line-up has it right, after all. *NBA 2K14* itself has set the bar pretty high for sports games, making some impressive visual leaps from the last generation. Little improvements like proper foot movement don't sound like much on the press release but see them in motion and you're left in no doubt as to how much they enhance the realistic experience. PS4's best sports game? We reckon.



BLACKLIGHT: RETRIBUTION

This free-to-play shooter isn't going to win any awards for innovation (or for anything, for that matter) but while it's as generic as shooty-bang gun games come, it's also inoffensive and a fair alternative to PS4's paid shooters for those who aren't committed enough to splash out on a full-price game. Bot AI is awful so you'd better hope there are other players online, plus there's the usual F2P problem of letting players buy their way to better arsenals. But hey, it's free – you can always just delete it once you've had your 15 minutes of fun.



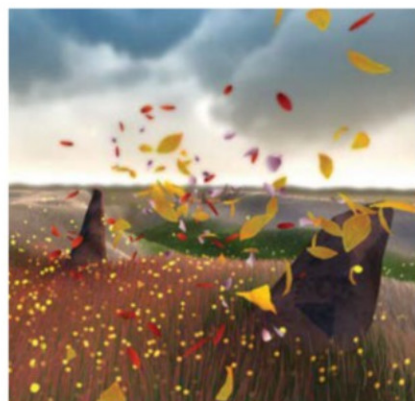
DC UNIVERSE ONLINE

Standing out somewhat from the crowd, *DCUO* is a few years old now and at first glance doesn't seem to fit that well with the first-party stunners and innovative indies in the PS4's line-up. But, like any MMORPG, it's all about connectivity, and that fits *exactly* with what PS4 is trying to do. Despite being a little ugly, it's good fun to superheroify yourself and run around the comparatively pretty world, plus the monetisation is well handled. Metropolis has been bustling since the game went free-to-play, and PS4 will attract a bunch more heroes too.



WARFRAME

Considering this is free, it's a damn good sci-fi shooter and one where we can easily see ourselves burning countless hours. It's *Dark Sector* meets *Borderlands*, with each of the randomly-generated missions housing scores of bad guys to murder, tons of loot to hoover up and all kinds of different materials and currency to slowly accrue until you can afford to buy (or build) some better gear. It's pretty daunting to start off with, but after a couple of hours of running missions with friends, you'll likely be completely hooked.



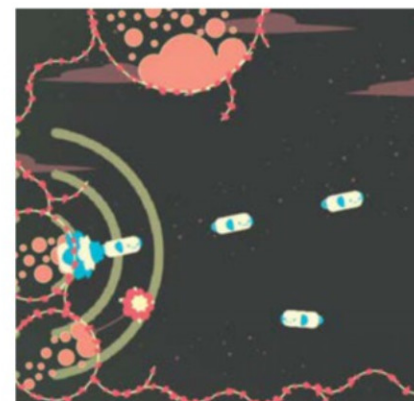
FLOWER

One of the most lovely experiences we've ever had. Creative without being pretentious, *Flower* – like *Sound Shapes* – is free to download on your PS4 if you've already got the PS3 version. The indie game that's about being the wind (yes, really) and helping flowers to grow, *Flower* on PS4 looks gorgeous at 1080p and 60fps, making it one of the games we'll end up spending far too much time playing instead of shooting people in the face. Insert something deep and meaningful about war and peace and flowers and stuff here.



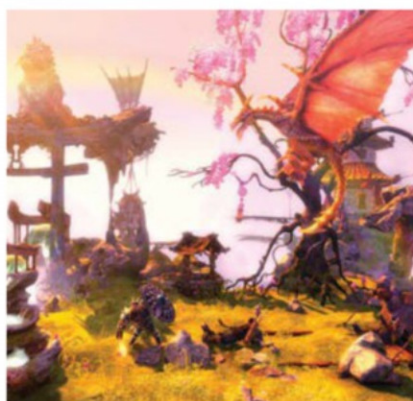
INJUSTICE: GODS AMONG US

There's not a huge amount of difference between the original PS3 release and this definitive version aside from the inclusion of all the DLC, if we're honest – NetherRealm's fighter was never the prettiest of games and it sure isn't a showcase for what the PS4 is capable of. Worst of all, our PS3 arcade sticks no longer work on PS4 so, while we were tempted to upgrade to the best version of this entertaining if janky superhero brawler, we'll probably hold off until *Guilty Gear* arrives to grab new sticks and take the plunge.



SOUND SHAPES

The Vita might not exactly have a vast catalogue of original games, but we'd much rather have fewer, more awesome games like *Sound Shapes* than an outpouring of crap. With noise now coming out of the controller as well as out of the telly (or swanky sound system), *Sound Shapes* is another innovative time-sink, but one well worth your attention. The best version for those who haven't played this wonderful rhythm-platformer and a free upgrade for those who have. Lovely. Oh, and you gotta love that delicious third Platinum, too...



TRINE 2

The prettiest of all the puzzle-platformers, *Trine 2* proved a marked improvement over the original. Despite being borderline broken at launch thanks to accidentally overpowered abilities that could circumvent most puzzles, this revised version fixes all such ails and makes a few new tweaks too, such as clever use of the DualShock 4's touchpad for tactile inputs like drawing objects into existence as the wizard. Worth buying and playing again? Hardly. But if you never played it the first time round, it's the best version of a great game.



ANGRY BIRDS: STAR WARS

Considering the mobile version of this shameless cash-in is either cheap or free on every bloody device going, we're not entirely sure why a full-price console release was ever seen to be a good idea. The game's not exactly terrible, sure, but it's barely worth the couple of quid you pay for it on a mobile phone, let alone this hugely inflated PS4 asking price. What's next? A full-price release of *Cut The Rope* on PS4? A *Doodle Jump* steelbook? A *Candy Crush Saga* console bundle? This deal is getting worse all the time...



SUPER MOTHERLOAD

The indies are coming and, while the more exciting ones like *Octodad: Dadliest Catch* and *Transistor* still aren't here, *Super Motherload* will more than do for the time being. It's hard to make a game about mining on Mars sound exciting, and we suppose it isn't, really. But what it is is curiously addictive and a blast in co-op, even if it doesn't look particularly next-gen. If you're looking for an indication of the kinds of interesting, alternative experiences indie games will bring to PS4, look no further than this enjoyable little curio.



JUST DANCE 2014

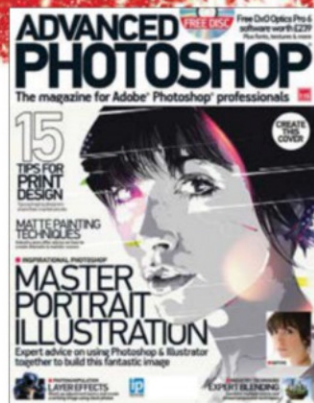
Okay, so using the PlayStation Camera to track full body movement is a huge step up from the PS3 games simply tracking the hand that was holding the Move controller and guessing how well you were dancing based on that alone. But still, did you really spend £350 on a powerful new console just to have those garish visuals and obnoxious tunes blast from your TV in slightly better quality? Of course not. Just draw the curtains, stick some terrible music on and dance your heart out instead. There. We just saved you 40 quid.



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INTERVIEW

EVERYBODY'S GONE BACK TO THE RAPTURE

DELVING DEEP INTO BIOSHOCK INFINITE: BURIAL AT SEA

Irrational producer Don Roy talks to **Play** about Irrational's return to Rapture in the new single-player DLC pack for BioShock Infinite, Burial At Sea



How was returning to Rapture?

I'm stoked. I wasn't at Irrational when they did [the first] *BioShock*, so getting to go back in and play with these toys has been insane.

The day they resurrected the Big Daddy was a big day for me. I'm really excited to see people experience it. It's a really steep narrative curve

that we're doing, we're telling a new interesting story... we set out to see if we could connect the two worlds and I think we've achieved that, so I want people to play it badly.

Did you struggle melding the worlds of Rapture and Columbia?

It was a bigger challenge than we realised, though

it was hugely rewarding. It was definitely different, because we have a lot of different designers [at Irrational] than we had on *BioShock*, and we had put so much focus on large-scale combat and open spaces, so moving into corridors and confined spaces was different. It's also different because you tackle combat differently; you're resource starved in Rapture, you set up combat

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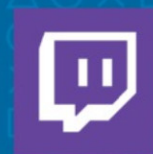
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AOX You'll get to play as a noir-style Elizabeth when the second chapter hits.

more than you did necessarily in *Infinite* by setting up traps with your Vigors. We had to do some learning while we were going through, but ultimately it became a very good melding between new and old and we found a really interesting balance.

Were there any parts of *Infinite* that you had to leave on the cutting room floor as you transitioned into the original *BioShock* territory?

No, what I really love the most is that it stands alone. We did *Infinite*, and that was exactly what we set out to do, and then when we finished we had a lot of discussions on what our DLC would look like. Obviously the ending of *Infinite* left us with the ability to have alternate options in Columbia, but it was more interesting for us to go: 'look, we've learnt all this interesting new tech and ways of storytelling, can we go back to Rapture and create something

that's alive?' To show people what Rapture would have looked like the way [Andrew] Ryan envisioned it, to see what citizens' lives were like. That became the challenge, so it just meant a new story.

Did you have to rebuild Rapture from scratch, then?

It was a lot of work to build Rapture again, it took our A team and all of our resources. It's all new, we knew what we were making and used [original Rapture] for reference to be true to it. But it's an entirely new creation of Rapture.

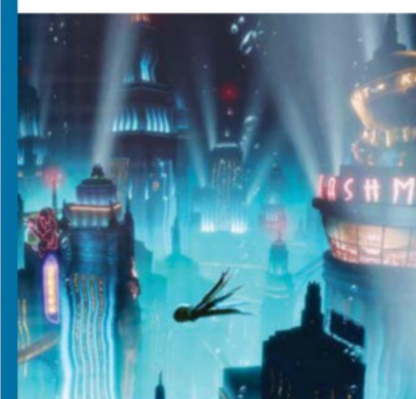
What hurdles did you have to overcome when trying to bring characters from across the two games into one universe?

It's really awesome to be able to bring back old friends into the story. The biggest challenge there is making them fit without forcing them in. So far, we've been

pleasantly surprised with how we've been able to make the worlds fit. We want to do true fan service, and not just for the sake of putting things in because fans want to see certain people, but it's important to us that as a narrative it makes sense. The writers have done an amazing job in figuring out how to make these two worlds touch and make sense every time that we introduce everybody.

Was it an intentional decision to bring back some horror themes?

I actually think there was plenty of horror in *Infinite*, it was just done differently. The story is paramount, so we work back from there. Does the thing we are adding to the game complement the story? Which is nice, because then we aren't beholden to any one thing. In this case, yes, more traditional horror themes seemed more suited to the dark alleys of Rapture than the sunny skies of Columbia.



REBUILDING RAPTURE

Telling a story is the most important thing for Irrational Games

■ Few studios are as adept as Irrational when it comes to creating a believable world with a detailed backstory. According to Roy, the team is more confident in its ability than ever: "We know our toolset now, and that's the biggest thing. We know, pretty well now, what the fans expect from any story that we want to show. So it's audio logs, voxophones; each space should tell a story. We know our guidelines and rules for ourselves, and knowing those lets us craft the experience that we want. We've been able to tell some really great stories through audio diaries, returning characters, showing people the citizens of Rapture living their lives, hearing what their lifestyle is. It's great to walk through this pristine Rapture before everything is destroyed. Being able to see this place through the eyes of people who are enjoying their existence is a different experience.

And finally, will Elizabeth be playable at all?

She will be playable character in the second chapter, and people are going to be able to see Rapture through her eyes. I'm so glad that we went there, because such a big part of the fan reception to *BioShock Infinite* was, well 'what was it like to be Elizabeth?' Being able to take that, which was no easy feat, I think it will be really impressive for fans. We can't really share any details right now, but what I will say is that she is different. Players will have a different experience with Elizabeth.

EXTENDED PLAY

THE ELDER SCROLLS V: SKYRIM

DLC, expansions and challenges toet more from Bethesda's epic RPG

DRAGONBORN (EXPANSION)

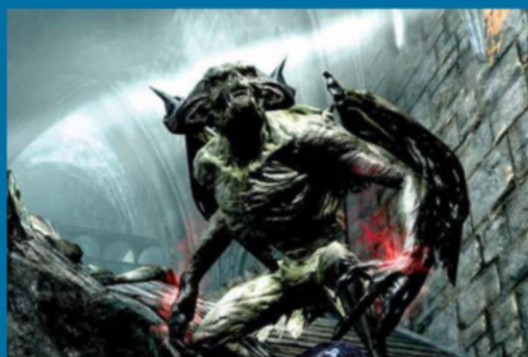
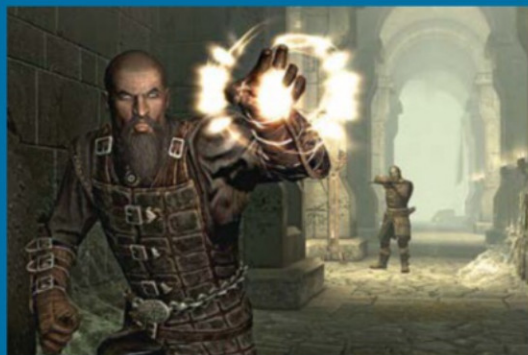
■ **THE THIRD PIECE** of DLC proved to be the most ambitious of the bunch, finally moving the action away from the frosty peaks of Skyrim to the isle of Solstheim. This move alone is a lovely nod to franchise fans, the offshore island giving clear views of some of Morrowind's landmarks including the volcanic peak of Red Mountain. It's populated with familiar beasts and races too, though it's every bit as good for *Skyrim* newcomers as it is for *Elder Scrolls* veterans. With another Dragonborn on the scene (the

original, no less), you're going to need a few new powers and abilities to hold your own – how about a couple of new shouts and the ability to ride dragons? Yep, sounds good to us too. Dragon riding is the biggest letdown in the whole package, sadly, with control and camera issues meaning it's nowhere near the awesome alternative to fast-travel we hoped it would be. But with a decent-sized main quest and a bunch of new side missions to get stuck into, this is most definitely DLC done right.



DAWNGUARD (DLC)

■ **BY COMPARISON TO** *Dragonborn*, *Skyrim*'s first expansion played things remarkably safe, although we'd be hard pressed to claim that it really suffered for it. The main hook here comes in the form of vampiric powers for those who seek them – while not quite as annoying as *Oblivion*'s 'surprise, you're a vampire now!' nonsense, becoming a Vampire Lord still wasn't all it was cracked up to be. The power of flight was somewhat mis-sold (in reality, you just hover inches above the ground) and like the main game's werewolf transformation, the new power proves to be both curse and blessing in almost equal measure. Still, the new enemies, missions and gear make the jaunt worthwhile, especially with the expansion also adding a handful of extra shouts and the ability for legendary dragons to spawn at random. Which, having killed and absorbed countless vanilla dragons over the course of the main campaign, was just what we wanted at the time. Not the most elaborate of add-ons, sure, but we're sure the lure of becoming a vampire will be enough to sell people on *Dawnguard* alone. And why not? The unique vampire skill tree is pretty cool, after all.



HEARTHFIRE (DLC)

■ **AS MUCH AS** we loved exploring *Skyrim*, actually settling down there turned out to be something of a disappointment. Housing options were limited at best and, having quickly filled each of the main game's abodes with skulls, rare trinkets and other people's stuff, *Hearthfire*'s

custom builds were exactly what we wanted. Or so we thought, before we realised just how much grinding was involved in even just getting a basic shack together, let alone building something you'd be proud to call home. A purely non-combat expansion, *Hearthfire* also offers the

ability to adopt children and settle down (eventually) in your very own home to start a family – even though the kids are just a bit creepy, you'll still get a twinge of parental pride as you protect them from a bandit attack or rescue them from coin-hungry kidnappers.

PURE CLASS (CHALLENGE)

■ **WE GET THAT** casting the lead character as a descendant of the dragons themselves made for a pretty powerful hero, but there's something even more satisfying about overcoming foes without having your character become a master of every discipline. Spellcasters could try forgoing heavy armour in favour of robes while ignoring all direct combat abilities completely, while melee builds should ignore all magic because flashy swordplay and deft parries are all that should matter to them. It's harder, sure, but that's a good thing – *Skyrim*'s hardly the trickiest of games, especially towards the end when you're just hacking and blasting through dragons like they're not even there. Restricting yourself is an easy way to make a second playthrough feel totally different to your first, or simply to fully immerse yourself in Bethesda's awesome world. Give it a go, if you're up to the challenge...



TROPHY GUIDE

PS PLUS
TROPHY
GUIDE

If you've been hammering the games added by November's PS Plus update, you'll have plenty of Trophies to be getting on with on PS3 and Vita. Here's a little advice on rounding up the last of them and getting your Platins...

METAL GEAR RISING:
REVENGEANCE

PLATFORM: PS3 DIFFICULTY: 5/5

■ **THIS IS A Platinum game**, which means two things: one, that it's ruddy brilliant, and two, that it's stupidly tough. Though most gamers will breeze through on standard difficulty, or even Hard, finishing it on Revengeance will take a lot of skill – especially since the Trophy to do so requires earning S Ranking on every level. Not an easy task at all. A large portion of the Trophies will unlock as you play through the game, most appearing for completing a stage or killing a certain number of enemy types. Each of the bosses, too, must be defeated on Hard or higher – we'd recommend just Hard – without taking any damage, so expect frustration. We *did* say it was a hard game.

There's a variety of other Trophies to look out for as well. There are four civilians in the game, who will be held by the enemy – you'll need to save each of these for the Trophy 'Humanitarian Assistance'. It saves automatically once each has been rescued so you can come back to it later, though it's probably best to tick it off once you spot a civvie.

'Peekaboo' is unlocked for finding all five 'Men in Boxes', which, if you make sure you explore each area properly, you should have no problem finding. This will also unlock the High-Frequency Wooden Sword, which you can use to defeat ten ranked battles without killing anyone, unlocking 'A Lover, Not a Fighter'. There are also eight Trophies to be unlocked for completing each mission in a particular way: they're fairly easy to complete, but you should be aware of them. They appear next to each other in the list, so take a peek.

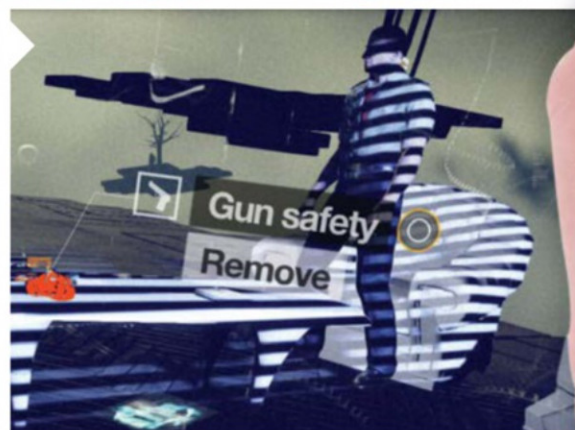
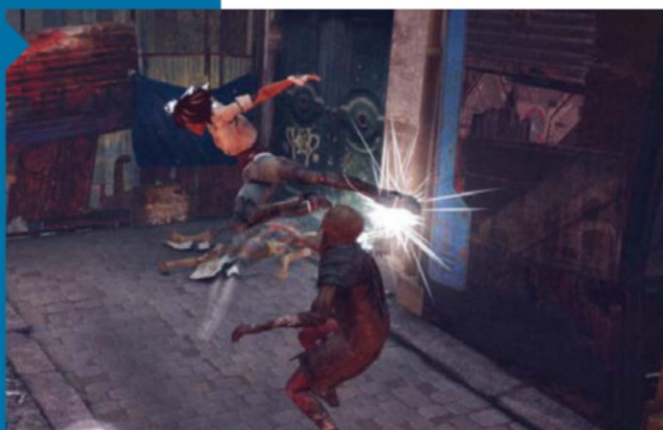
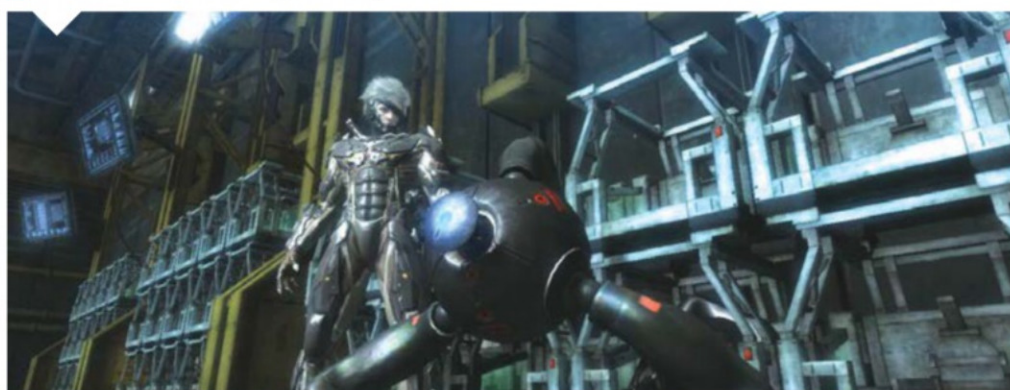
REMEMBER ME

PLATFORM: PS3 DIFFICULTY: 1/5

■ **FROM ONE HACK-AND-SLASH** game to another, and the difference is huge. *Remember Me* might not be as good as *Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance*, but it's certainly got an easier bunch of Trophies to hunt. There are, of course, the obligatory mission completion Trophies that unlock along the way, as well as three difficulty Trophies. Just start on Memory Hunter difficulty though, it's not a tricky game and the difference in challenge isn't all that noticeable really.

There's a wide selection of combat Trophies, most of which will unlock without even trying. Be sure to check them out, just so you know what to aim for – though there is one tricky one to keep an eye out for. 'Leader of the Pack' requires you to defeat a Mourner enemy without killing any of its sidekicks. It's a pain, but what you need to do here is slowly build up Focus to enable your Sensen DOS ability – this will stun everyone, including the Mourner, in the vicinity. Once stunned, attack the Mourner – shoot him if you have to – to deal as much damage as you can. Repeat as you must, but *don't* kill any of the weaker enemies.

Lastly, each Memory Remix has a particular Trophy attached to it that requires exacting a certain course of events. They're not especially tricky to find, and they do take a bit of experimenting, but they're worth remembering (pun intended) before aiming for the actual objective of the Memory Remix. There's also a Trophy 'Unbelievable Truth' for killing your Memory Remix victim in their memory – just play around with the options to make sure you kill off every one of the Memory victims.



MOTORSTORM RC

PLATFORM: PS3/VITA **DIFFICULTY:** 2/5

■ **MOTORSTORM RC** WILL actually give you two platinum Trophies for the price of one. Just collect all the Trophies and then sync your save on the opposite platform to unlock all the Trophies at once. Thankfully the Trophies aren't too difficult, though they do require a bit of effort on your part, as well as willing friends to beat their times

on any of the events. To unlock hidden Trophy 'Rare Reward' simply score 20 goals in the Playground section to unlock two secret vehicles. Then there's 'Swish', which is unlocked by launching a vehicle off a ramp and through a basketball hoop. That's it for tricky Trophies – the others are all self-explanatory.



"EACH OF THE BOSSES MUST BE DEFEATED ON HARD OR HIGHER – WE'D RECOMMEND JUST HARD"



ODDWORLD: STRANGER'S WRATH

PLATFORM: VITA **DIFFICULTY:** 1/5

■ **THOUGH THE PLATINUM** Trophy for *Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath* isn't particularly challenging, you can minimise the number of playthroughs by completing it on Hard the first time around. There are a lot of Trophies that are missable, so you should make sure you're familiar with the list to know what you're getting in to. Many of these will involve finding hidden locations, while others are simply to kill certain types of enemies.

For 'Farmer Harmer' you need to look out for Beeks' Oppl Farm. Follow the various instructions until you find Beeks, then speak to him to get him to follow you. Take him to the walkway, melee him to the ground then keep hitting him until you get him into the machine press on the right-hand side of the farm. Web him with Bolamites, then activate the press – voila, squished Beeks.

For 'Grubb Idol', after exiting the catacombs follow the path through a stone village and look for a room with wooden planks over it. Destroy the planks then enter the village to find a rope to climb up to find the idol inside.

For 'Hidden What?!' you need to find a Clakker talking about the Black Market in New York City. Get the password from her, then use the rope to head up to the Black Market. Give the password and you're in.

For 'Dirty Water', when you're making your way through the Wolvark Barracks you'll cross a second bridge. From here, jump left into the water and look for a rope on the right to lead up to a switch and the hidden entrance. Lastly is 'Go With the Flo...', also in the Wolvark Barracks. You'll come to a room with toilet stalls, from here look for a stack of green boxes. Climb past the boxes and into a vent to find boxes of medicine on the other side.



“PLAYSTATION BECAME THE MOST IMPRESSIVE GAMING PLATFORM ON THE PLANET”



EXTENDED PLAY

LONG LIVE PLAYSTATION

Play rewinds the clock and casts a spotlight on the moment where it all began

With PlayStation 4 nestled comfortably on shop shelves and under the telly boxes of many a home across the globe, it only seems appropriate to take a moment to reflect and cast our minds back to 1994, the year where it all began and that particular moment in history where the PlayStation brand took its first baby steps towards world domination.

What's really interesting is that the genesis of Sony's chunky grey box of tricks can actually be traced back to the house that Mario built. Yes, Nintendo and Sony were once in bed together. Thankfully for us, that unholy gaming matrimony

was not meant to last. Prior to Sony flying solo, it entered into a deal with its home turf rival to produce a piece of kit that would allow the SNES to spin CDs, with Sony concocting the CD format and Nintendo taking care of the game side of the business.

However, it all went south when president of Nintendo, Hiroshi Yamauchi, quietly nixed the deal when he realised Sony would have total control over any and all games cooked up on this new CD format. Rather than sit Sony down for the old "it's not you, it's me" chat that has killed countless relationships before it, Nintendo instead chose to

publicly break the Japanese giant's heart at the outset of a keynote speech at CES. Alas, Sony picked itself up, wiped away the tears, sallied forth and conjured up its own standalone console: the PlayStation.



INSTANT EXPERT Five things you need to know about PlayStation

■ EARLY DAYS

The PlayStation originally began life as a partnership with Nintendo to craft a CD-based add-on for the SNES.

■ FACELIFT

In 2000, a smaller model was introduced replacing the old grey console. It was also renamed the PSone in a bid to avoid confusion.

■ BIG NUMBERS

The PlayStation was the first ever console to reach 100 million units in sales, which it achieved almost ten years after it first hit shelves.

■ LAST ORDERS

The last PSone consoles to ship to consumers were sold in Christmas of 2004, ten years after the historic launch in Japan.

■ THAT'S ALL, FOLKS

However, it was still a full two years before Sony ceased all production on original PlayStation games.



FIVE FOR FIVE

A quintet of good reasons to dust off that PlayStation

■ WIPEOUT

It was fast, furious and overloaded with a rip-roaring soundtrack that fuelled many a late night for those of us that remember it. *WipeOut* was the poster child for PlayStation's staunch stance on the perception of games: they could be cool, and weren't just for kids.

■ METAL GEAR SOLID

Hide behind walls, inside boxes, sneak past guards and watch ridiculously long cut-scenes! What Best Of PSone list would be complete without *Metal Gear Solid*? Hideo Kojima's series may have started out on other platforms, but it only truly came to life on PlayStation in 1998.

■ RESIDENT EVIL 2

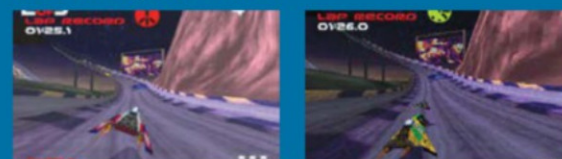
Resident Evil 2 served as a massive improvement over the original in every sense (bar the annoying tank controls), and certainly helped further the gaming world's fascination with the undead. Oh, and zombie king George Romero directed the Japanese commercial for its launch.

■ SILENT HILL

Konami's cage-rattler scared the bejesus out of us and helped push survival horror in weird new directions. It's a deftly-crafted tale of terror, with Harry Mason struggling to find his missing daughter in the abandoned town of Silent Hill that's been swallowed whole by a creepy fog.

■ FINAL FANTASY VII

Final Fantasy VII was, and always will be, a groundbreaking moment because it set the bar for every game that would follow in its footsteps. Yes, the series has many great moments and memorable titles, but ask most fans and they'll tell you *VII* is the one they remember most fondly.



ΔΟΧ ΔΟΧ We remember *Nightmare Creatures* looking a lot scarier.

After a little legal tussle with Nintendo over the name of the machine and certain technical aspects, PlayStation was released onto Japanese shores just in time for Christmas in 1994, with North America and Europe following suit in September of 1995. It was a gamble, because prior to its arrival consoles relied on cartridges and said format was never questioned up until that moment. It quickly became clear that CDs were the way forward thanks to storage space, coupled with far higher video and sound production quality. PlayStation quickly became the most impressive gaming platform on the planet, and everyone knew it.

"I was working at Attention To Detail, on *BattleMorph* for the launch of the Atari Jaguar CD at Atari's Sunnyvale Headquarters when the local Fry's electrical store put a poster in the window saying that they had a promo machine there for

costumers to try PlayStation before it's release," says Stuart Tilley, former game director at Studio Liverpool. "I went in and it was running *WipeOut*. I remember turning to my boss and saying "Fred, we've backed the wrong horse mate!" PlayStation was just so far ahead of everything else."

It wasn't just the technology that was dropping jaws; it was also the fact that Sony traversed a far edgier route than its competitors with its marketing push. PlayStation was cool, and Sony made every attempt to capitalise on this. "At the time, it just felt so different and revolutionary to what had gone before. The games felt more mature, not in terms of content but gameplay," explains former Bizarre Creations environment artist, David McDonald. "I think PlayStation and the games that were born under PlayStation in many cases rewrote the rule book on how we perceive and play games."

What Sony had done with the PlayStation brand was unheard of in the gaming space, yanking the spotlight away from the core teen demographic and thrusting the concept of gaming into the world of lads mag, the emerging club scene (consoles began popping up in dance nightclubs across the UK and Europe) and essentially turning the whole concept of gaming on its head. "In the Nineties, the announcement of new hardware was so much more mysterious than it is in our instantaneous

information era. The PlayStation had been a rumor for a long time in magazines, and when it came to life, it was like a dream come true," says *Remember Me* creative director, Jean-Maxime Moris. "The console revolutionised the way gamers and society in general looked at games, basically democratising them. It was to me the very first gaming revolution. What Sony did with the brand was simply multiplying the market tenfold by taking games out of their teenage boy niche. Other revolutions came after the PlayStation, but they were the true pioneers of modern gaming."

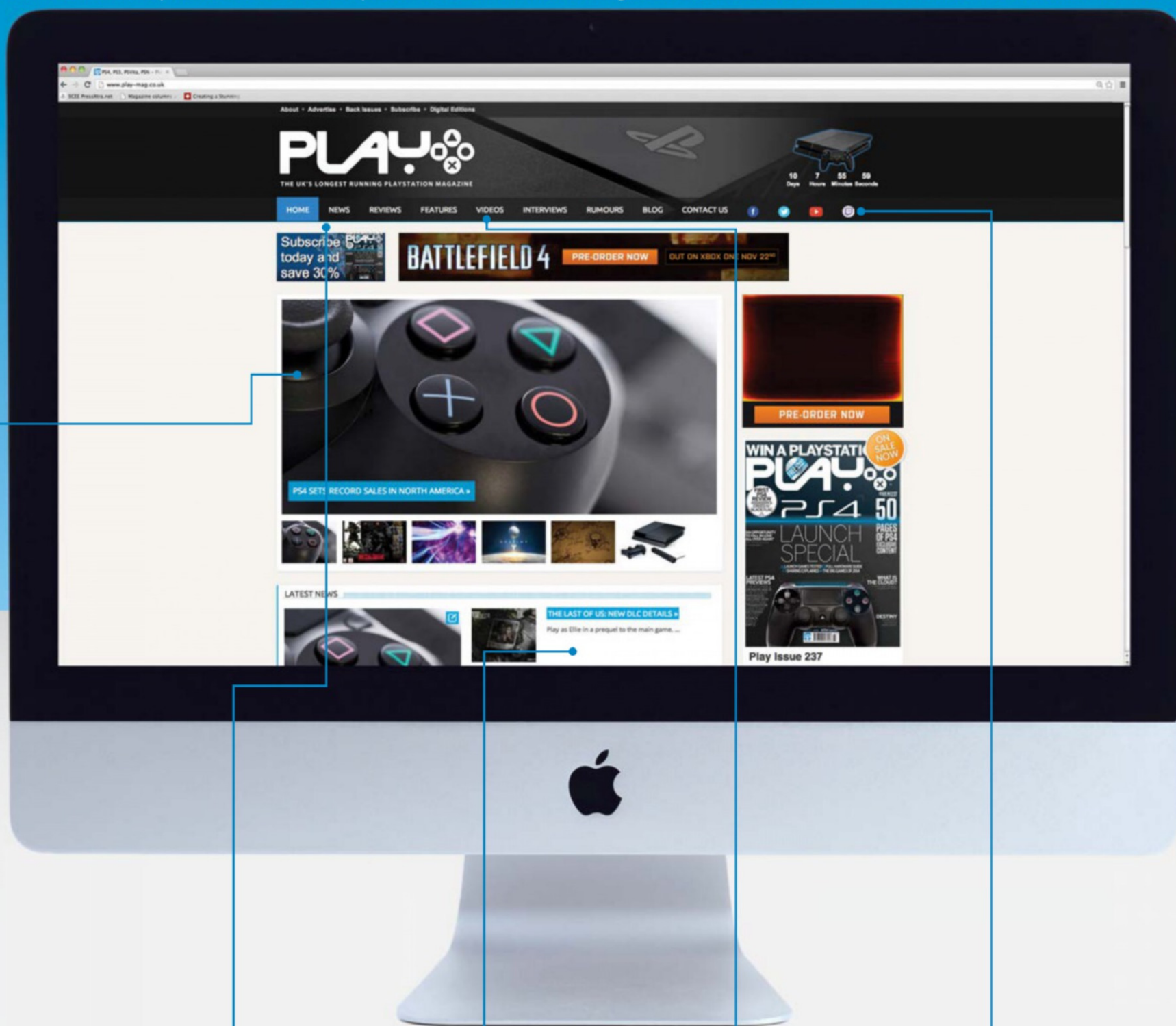
Coupled with a bombastic launch line up, including *WipeOut* (a series Sony has foolishly decided to sideline for the arrival of PS4), Namco's brawler, *Tekken*, and the eye-wateringly brilliant *Ridge Racer*, PlayStation was here to stay. This wasn't just a games machine – it was the future.



ΔΟΧ ΔΟΧ *Syphon Filter* has been sadly lost to the sands of time.

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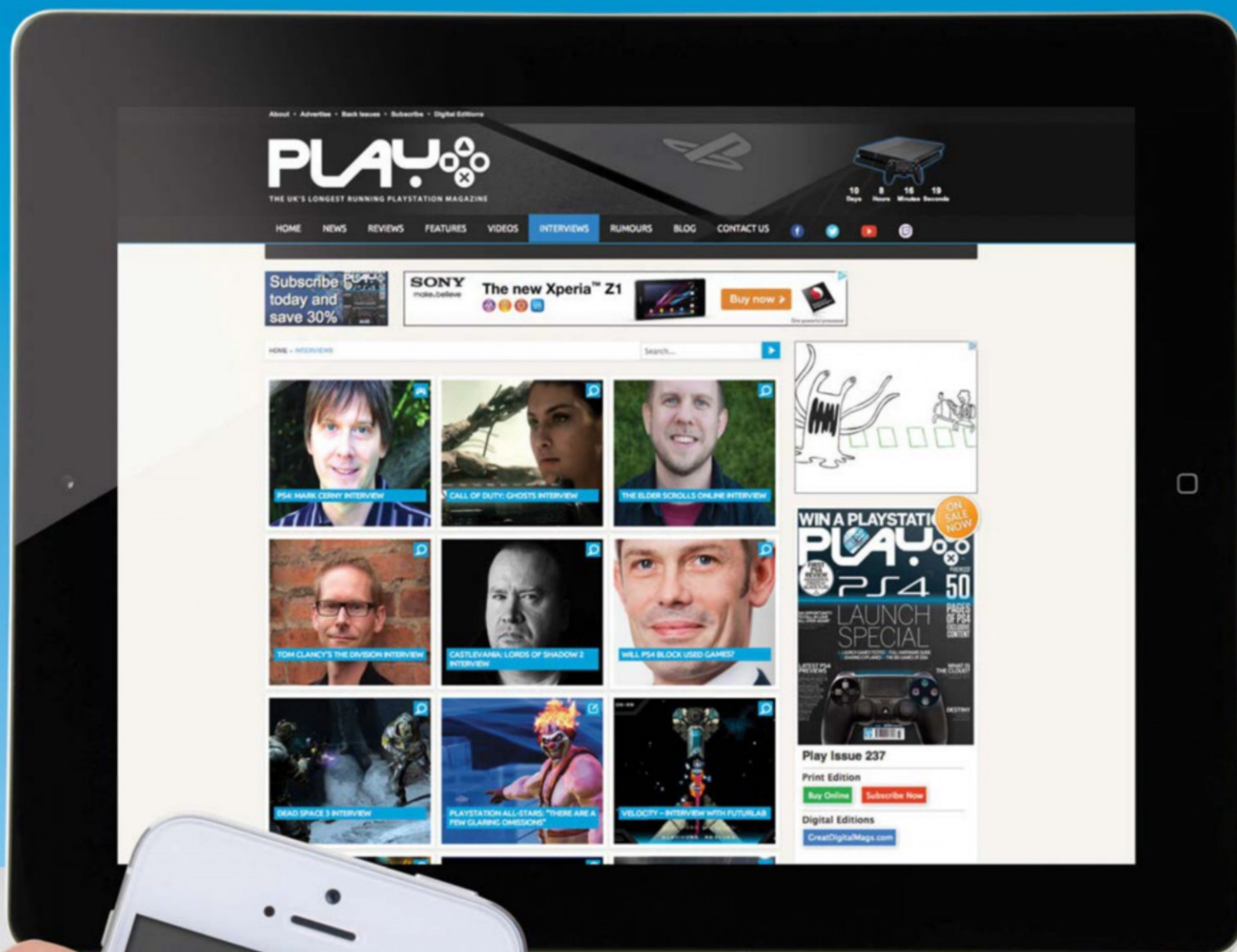
■ Scroll down and all the recent stories can be browsed, sorted by type. The site is updated daily with the latest PlayStation content, so keep coming back for more...

■ Video content is now fully embedded into posts, meaning it should run perfectly whatever device you choose to view the site on. New footage and trailers for everyone!

■ Full social media integration should help build a better, stronger Play community. Check out the latest stories and footage, then have your say on Facebook or Twitter.

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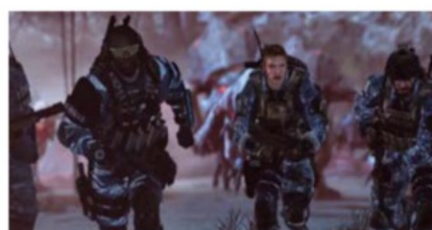
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CALL OF DUTY: GHOSTS - EXTINCTION
ALIENS ARE THE NEW ZOMBIES



ASSASSIN'S CREED LIBERATION HD
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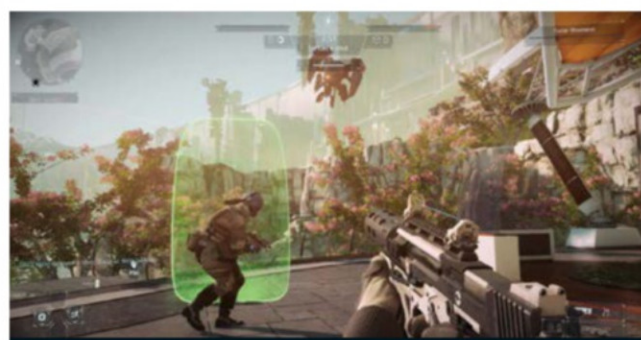


BLAZBLUE: CHRONO PHANTASMA
THE OPENING TO ARC'S CRAZY FIGHTER

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PS4: ALL THE LAUNCH GAMES



SCHEDULED STREAMING



With so many day-one games to choose from, chances are there will be a couple that you don't end up picking up despite being interested in them. So if you want

to see *Knack* in action or check out whether or not it's worth upgrading to next-gen versions of *Battlefield* or *ACIV*, swing by our Twitch page and see them all in action.



Join us from 1pm GMT every Friday for live broadcasts of the latest PlayStation games, be it the biggest new releases or the multiplayer titles that everyone is

playing. Streams will be backed up for you to enjoy later if you can't join us live, plus there will be plenty more live streaming going on once more PS4 games arrive...

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DESTINY: THE BEST THING EVER?



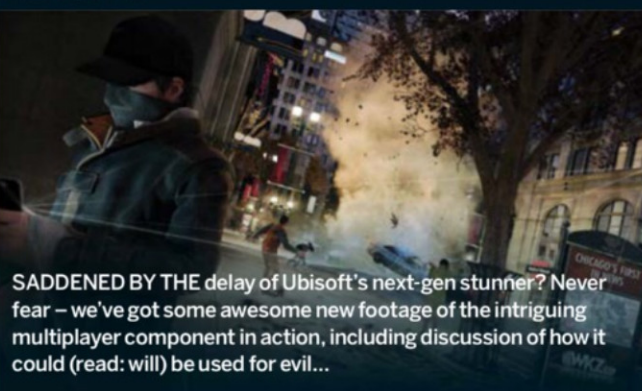
WITH BUNGIE'S RETURN to PlayStation looming large, the team discusses why both franchise and developer are such a big deal.

PLAYSTATION 4 LAUNCH GUIDE



THE PLAY TEAM weighs in on the games, features and exciting possibilities that make the launch of PlayStation 4 the most exciting gaming event in years.

WATCH DOGS



SADDENED BY THE delay of Ubisoft's next-gen stunner? Never fear – we've got some awesome new footage of the intriguing multiplayer component in action, including discussion of how it could (read: will) be used for evil...

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XONE

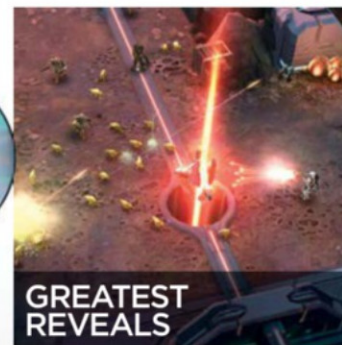
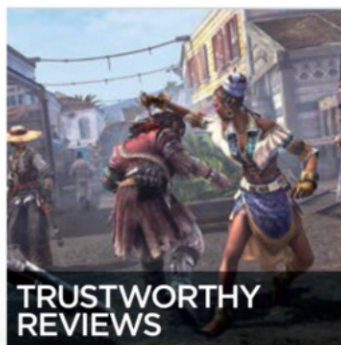


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TEAM PICKS WE'VE MOSTLY BEEN PLAYING...



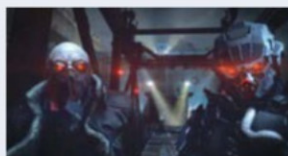
top five LUKE ALBIGÉS

- 1 Killzone: Shadow Fall
- 2 Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag
- 3 Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn
- 4 Resogun
- 5 Beyond: Two Souls



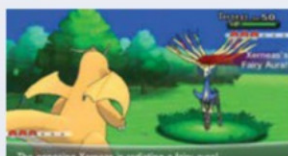
top five EDEN FRANKHAM

- 1 Counter Strike: Global Offensive
- 2 Battlefield 4
- 3 Hotline Miami
- 4 Batman: Arkham Origins
- 5 Deus Ex: Human Revolution



top five STEVE HOLMES

- 1 Killzone: Shadow Fall
- 2 Call Of Duty: Ghosts
- 3 Battlefield 4
- 4 War Thunder
- 5 NBA 2K14



top five SAM SMITH

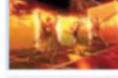
- 1 Pokemon X
- 2 Ace Attorney: Dual Destinies
- 3 Lego Marvel Super Heroes
- 4 WWE 2K14
- 5 Grand Theft Auto V

PS3 LISTING



GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
007 Legends	225	44%
3D Dot Game Heroes	192	87%
50 Cent: Blood On The Sand	177	70%
Ace Combat: Assault Horizon	211	78%
The Adventures Of Tintin	212	58%
Afro Samurai	177	61%
Agarest: Generations Of War	187	78%
Agarest: Generations Of War 2	223	43%
Agarest: Generations Of War Zero	209	52%
Air Conflicts: Secret Wars	208	58%
Alice: Madness Returns	207	57%
Aliens: Colonial Marines	230	45%
Aliens Vs Predator	189	79%
Alone In The Dark	173	70%
Alpha Protocol	193	83%
Ape Escape	208	55%
Arcana Heart 3	207	79%
Armored Core For Answer	173	65%
Armored Core 4	153	67%
Armored Core V	217	60%
Army Of Two	164	80%
Army Of Two: The 40th Day	188	65%
Army Of Two: The Devil's Cartel	231	44%
Ar Tonelico Qoga: Knell Of Ar Ciel	203	27%
Assassin's Creed	161	58%
Assassin's Creed II	186	89%
Assassin's Creed III	225	78%
Assassin's Creed: Brotherhood	199	91%
Assassin's Creed Revelations	212	75%
Asura's Wrath	216	67%
Atelier Rorona: The Alchemist Of Arland	198	77%
Backbreaker	193	70%
Band Hero	187	68%
Batman: Arkham Asylum	183	85%
Batman: Arkham City	211	94%
 Rocksteady's sequel to the excellent Arkham Asylum was a serious contender for game of the year.		
Batman: Arkham Origins	237	85%
Battle Fantasia	176	67%
Battlefield: Bad Company	168	78%
Battlefield: Bad Company 2	190	93%
Battlefield 3	212	88%
Battleship	219	44%
Bayonetta*	187	93%
The Beatles: Rock Band	184	96%
Beowulf	161	61%
Beyond: Two Souls	236	70%
Binary Domain	216	70%
Bionic Commando	179	82%
BioShock	172	93%
BioShock 2	189	88%
BioShock Infinite	230	97%
 It's so rare to play something and know that it will be considered an all-time great. A wonderful FPS with deep, tactical combat.		
Birds Of Steel	217	55%
BlackSite	163	43%
Bladestorm: The Hundred Years' War	160	58%
BlazBlue: Calamity Trigger	190	85%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift	198	94%
Blazing Angels	151	54%
Bleach: Soul Resurrección	209	63%
Blitz: The League II	172	67%
Blur	193	86%
Bodycount	210	54%
Borderlands	185	80%
Borderlands 2	223	90%
 Borderlands 2 is an excellent lesson in sequel-making and is easily one of 2012's best games.		
The Bourne Conspiracy	168	72%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Brink	206	67%
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	171	75%
Brütal Legend	185	79%
Bulletstorm	203	86%
The Bureau: XCOM Declassified	235	57%
Burnout Paradise	162	74%
Buzz!: Quiz TV	168	82%
Buzz! Quiz World	185	70%
Call Of Duty 3	151	77%
Call Of Duty: World At War	173	68%
Call Of Duty 4: Modern Warfare	160	88%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 2	186	94%
Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare 3	212	88%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops	199	94%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops II	226	80%
Call Of Juarez: Bound In Blood	181	85%
Call Of Juarez: The Cartel	208	30%
Captain America: Super Soldier	208	70%
Carnival Island	213	53%
Cars 2	208	68%
Catherine	215	61%
Champion Jockey	210	50%
Chronicles Of Riddick: Assault On Dark Athena	178	87%
Child Of Eden	211	80%
Civilization Revolution	168	90%
Clash Of The Titans	193	65%
Clive Barker's Jericho	159	84%
The Club	163	80%
Colin McRae: DiRT	158	91%
Colin McRae: DiRT 2	184	87%
Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3	178	65%
Conan	160	71%
Condemned 2	165	78%
Conflict: Denied Ops	164	50%
Crash Time 4: The Syndicate	218	37%
Create	199	71%
Cross Edge	182	59%
Crysis 2	204	72%
Crysis 3	230	61%
The Cursed Crusade	211	40%
Damnation	181	38%
Damage Inc: Pacific Squadron WWII	223	37%
Dance Dance Revolution	201	52%
Dante's Inferno	189	80%
The Darkness	154	91%
The Darkness II	215	76%
Dark Sector	165	62%
Dark Souls	211	90%
Dark Void	188	81%
Darksiders	188	83%
Darksiders II	221	86%
DC Universe Online	202	80%
de Blob 2	203	65%
Dead Or Alive 5	223	78%
Dead Island	210	79%
Dead Island: Riptide	231	65%
Dead Rising 2	197	78%
Dead Rising 2: Off The Record	211	61%
Dead Space	172	87%
Dead Space 2	201	92%
Dead Space 3	228	70%
Dead To Rights: Retribution	192	68%
Deadly Premonition: The Director's Cut	231	82%
Deadpool	233	60%
Def Jam: Icon	151	79%
Def Jam Rapstar	199	72%
Defiance	231	50%
Demon's Souls	193	92%
Destroy All Humans!: Path Of The Furon	178	29%
Deus Ex: Human Revolution	209	91%
Devil May Cry 4	163	89%
Devil May Cry HD Collection	217	80%
Diablo III	235	89%
DiRT 3	206	85%
DiRT Showdown	219	84%
Disgaea 3: Absence Of Justice	175	81%
Dishonored	224	92%
Disney Infinity	235	81%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
DJ Hero	186	91%
DJ Hero 2	198	88%
Doctor Who: The Eternity Clock	220	32%
Doom 3: BFG Edition	225	69%
DmC Devil May Cry	227	93%
 DmC injects new life into one of the best genres in all of gaming, and does so with a style and confidence that elevates it beyond its roots.		
Dragon Age: Origins	186	82%
Dragon Age II	203	86%
Dragon Ball: Raging Blast	186	40%
Dragon Ball Z: Burst Limit	168	61%
Dragon's Crown	235	87%
Driver: San Francisco	209	68%
Duke Nukem Forever	207	33%
Dungeon Siege III	206	80%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam	160	40%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 2	176	43%
Dynasty Warriors: Gundam 3	208	56%
Dynasty Warriors: Strikeforce	189	37%
Dynasty Warriors 6	164	30%
Dynasty Warriors 6: Empires	181	44%
Dynasty Warriors 7	204	32%
Dynasty Warriors 7: Empires	230	40%
Dynasty Warriors 8	234	71%
EA Sports Active 2	200	81%
EA Sports Grand Slam Tennis	215	75%
EA Sports MMA	198	89%
Eat Lead	178	38%
EDF: Insect Armageddon	208	64%
The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	152	91%
The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim	212	93%
 WARNING: The latest addition to Bethesda's superb franchise will seriously damage your social life.		
El Shaddai: Ascension Of The Metatron	208	77%
Enchanted Arms	152	69%
Enemy Territory: Quake Wars	168	60%
Enslaved: Odyssey To The West	197	83%
Epic Mickey 2: The Power Of Two	226	55%
Eternal Sonata	176	87%
Everybody's Golf 5	158	88%
Everybody's Golf: World Tour	165	91%
Eye Of Judgment	159	65%
EyePet	185	83%
F1 2010	197	86%
F1 2011	211	71%
F1 2012	223	79%
F1 Race Stars	226	61%
FaceBreaker	170	55%
Fairytale Fights	186	51%
Fallout 3	173	97%
Fallout: New Vegas	198	88%
Family Guy: Back To The Multiverse	227	40%
Fantastic Four: Rise Of The Silver Surfer	155	39%
Far Cry 2	172	74%
Far Cry 3	226	88%
FEAR	151	81%
FEAR 2: Project Origin	176	87%
FEAR 3	208	60%
FIFA 10	184	90%
FIFA 11	197	91%
FIFA 12	210	86%
FIFA 13	223	82%
FIFA 14	236	90%
FIFA Street (2012)	217	74%
FIFA Street 3	163	66%
The Fight	199	42%
Fight Night Champion	203	88%
Fight Night Round 3	151	87%
Fight Night Round 4	181	84%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn	236	81%
Final Fantasy XIII	190	85%
Final Fantasy XIII-2	214	80%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage	198	51%
Fist Of The North Star: Ken's Rage 2	230	58%
Folklore	158	66%
Formula One Championship Edition	151	72%

THIS MONTH'S NEW ENTRIES

The newest games, freshly squeezed among all your old favourites

Batman: Arkham Origins PS3	85%
Final Fantasy XIV: A Realm Reborn PS3	81%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Fracture	171	72%
Front Mission Evolved	198	52%
Fuel	180	49%
Full Auto 2: Battlelines	151	69%
Fuse	232	73%
G-Force	183	59%
Game Of Thrones	220	39%
Genji: Days Of The Blade	151	38%
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	157	83%
Ghost Recon Future Soldier	219	60%
Ghostbusters: The Videogame	180	80%
GI Joe	183	22%
The Godfather	151	37%
The Godfather II	178	38%
God Of War III	190	88%
God Of War: Ascension	230	90%
 With brilliantly reworked combat mechanics and stunning graphics, <i>Ascension</i> is a gloriously violent prequel to the series.		
God Of War Collection*	188	93%
God Of War Collection: Volume II	210	70%
The Golden Compass	162	32%
GoldenEye 007: Reloaded	213	63%
Gran Turismo 5	200	85%
Grand Theft Auto IV	166	98%
Grand Theft Auto V	236	97%
 Rockstar's latest is a masterpiece; the perfect swansong for the generation and a wonderful addition to the franchise.		
Grid 2	232	79%
Green Day: Rock Band	194	77%
GTA: Episodes From Liberty City	191	94%
Guitar Hero III	160	90%
Guitar Hero 5	184	81%
Guitar Hero: Aerosmith	168	63%
Guitar Hero Greatest Hits	182	76%
Guitar Hero Metallica	179	88%
Guitar Hero: Van Halen	189	65%
Guitar Hero: Warriors Of Rock	197	71%
Guitar Hero World Tour	173	95%
Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows: Part 1	200	21%
Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows: Part 2	208	37%
Harry Potter And The Half-Blood Prince	182	60%
Harry Potter And The Order Of The Phoenix	155	32%
Haze	167	64%
Heavenly Sword	157	71%
Heavy Rain	189	94%
Heroes Over Europe	184	48%
Hitman: Absolution	225	93%
Hitman HD Trilogy	230	75%
Homefront	203	69%
The House Of The Dead: Overkill	212	75%
Hunted: The Demon's Forge	207	59%
Hyperdimension Neptunia	202	21%
Ico & Shadow Of The Colossus Classics HD	210	94%
IL-2 Sturmovik: Birds Of Prey	183	72%
The Incredible Hulk	168	52%
inFamous	180	81%
inFamous 2	207	83%
Injustice: Gods Among Us	231	80%
International Cricket 2010	194	61%
Inversion	220	49%
Iron Man	166	58%
Iron Man 2	193	50%
The Jak And Daxter Trilogy	216	82%
Jak And Daxter: The Lost Frontier	187	59%
James Bond 007: Blood Stone	199	63%
James Cameron's Avatar: The Game	187	64%
JASF: Jane's Advanced Strike Fighters	217	30%
Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights	159	78%
Just Cause 2	190	87%
Kane & Lynch: Dead Men	160	73%
Kane & Lynch 2: Dog Days	196	71%
Katamari Forever	184	88%
Killer Is Dead	235	75%
Killzone 2	176	93%
Killzone 3	202	80%
Kingdom Hearts HD 1.5 ReMIX	236	80%
Kingdoms Of Amalur: Reckoning	215	70%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
The King Of Fighters XII	182	82%
The King Of Fighters XIII	213	76%
Knights Contract	202	53%
Kung Fu Panda 2	207	20%
Kung Fu Rider	196	65%
Lair	158	52%
LA Noire	206	91%
Last Rebellion	191	42%
Legend Of Spyro: Dawn Of The Dragon	174	54%
Legendary	173	62%
Lego Batman	173	65%
Lego Batman 2	221	80%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 1-4	194	79%
Lego Harry Potter: Years 5-7	213	67%
Lego Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures	167	73%
Lego Indiana Jones 2: The Adventure Continues	187	71%
Lego Pirates Of The Caribbean	206	76%
Lego Rock Band	187	75%
Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga	160	76%
Lego Star Wars III: The Clone Wars	204	79%
Lego: The Lord Of The Rings	227	85%
Leisure Suit Larry: Box Office Bust	180	24%
LittleBigPlanet	172	94%
LittleBigPlanet 2	201	96%
LittleBigPlanet: Karting	225	85%
Lollipop Chainsaw	221	72%
London 2012	221	45%
The Lord Of The Rings: Aragorn's Quest	199	60%
The Lord Of The Rings: Conquest	175	52%
The Lord Of The Rings: War In The North	213	42%
Lost Planet 2	192	75%
Lost Planet 3	236	58%
Lost Planet: Extreme Condition	163	69%
Lost: The Video Game	164	38%
Madagascar 3	224	39%
Madden NFL 10	184	82%
Madden NFL 11	196	84%
Madden NFL 12	209	85%
Madden NFL 13	223	86%
Mafia II	196	81%
MAG	189	68%
Majin And The Forsaken Kingdom	199	72%
Marvel Vs Capcom 3	202	88%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance	151	64%
Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2	185	57%
Max Payne 3	219	77%
Mass Effect 2	201	97%
Mass Effect 3	216	93%
Medal Of Honor	198	86%
Medal Of Honor Airborne	161	85%
Medal Of Honor: Warfighter	225	72%
Medieval Moves	213	47%
Mercenaries 2: World In Flames	171	78%
Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance	228	91%
 Metal Gear Rising: Revengeance is another world-class entry in gaming's most fundamentally playable genre.		
Metal Gear Solid 4	167	92%
Metal Gear Solid HD Collection	214	91%
Metro: Last Light	231	60%
Michael Jackson: The Experience	205	58%
Midnight Club: Los Angeles	173	84%
Mindjack	202	38%
Mini Ninjas	184	80%
Mirror's Edge	173	71%
ModNation Racers	192	90%
Monster Madness	170	78%
Mortal Kombat	205	81%
Mortal Kombat vs DC Universe	173	68%
MotoGP 10/11	204	64%
MotoGP 13	233	74%
MotorStorm	151	92%
MotorStorm: Apocalypse	203	76%
MotorStorm: Pacific Rift	172	93%
Mud: FIM Motocross Championship	217	50%
MX Vs ATV: Alive	206	42%
MX Vs ATV Reflex	189	68%
MX Vs ATV Untamed	164	58%
naï'd	201	61%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Naruto: Ultimate Ninja Storm	174	59%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS Generations	217	53%
Naruto Shippuden: UNS 3	230	85%
Naughty Bear	195	64%
NBA 2K10	186	79%
NBA 2K11	199	82%
NBA 2K12	211	88%
NBA 2K13	224	88%
NBA Jam	200	68%
NBA Live 09	170	81%
NBA Street: Homecourt	151	68%
Need For Speed Carbon	151	76%
Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit	199	91%
Need For Speed: Most Wanted	225	95%
 Need For Speed: Most Wanted is easily the best arcade racer of this generation. We absolutely love it.		
Need For Speed ProStreet	161	86%
Need For Speed Shift	184	81%
Need For Speed: The Run	213	63%
Need For Speed Undercover	173	75%
NeverDead	215	39%
Nier	192	54%
Ni No Kuni: Wrath Of The White Witch	227	85%
NHL 10	184	85%
NHL 11	198	89%
NHL 12	210	78%
NHL 13	223	74%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma	154	88%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2	184	82%
Ninja Gaiden 3	217	63%
Ninja Gaiden 3: Razor's Edge	231	80%
No More Heroes: Heroes' Paradise	206	89%
One Piece: Pirate Warriors	224	69%
Operation Flashpoint: Dragon Rising	185	78%
Operation Flashpoint: Red River	205	75%
The Orange Box	161	93%
Overlord: Raising Hell	167	65%
Overlord II	181	68%
Pain	183	69%
Payday 2	235	79%
Persona 4 Arena	231	91%
 Essential for both <i>Persona</i> fans and fighting game enthusiasts, <i>Persona 4 Arena</i> is an absolute joy to play.		
PES 2010	185	72%
PES 2011	197	73%
PES 2012	210	74%
Phineas & Ferb: Across The 2nd Dimension	211	66%
PixelJunk Racers	160	74%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
PlayStation Move Heroes	204	54%
POTC: At World's End	154	48%
Port Royale 3: Pirates & Merchants	224	54%
Portal 2	205	95%
Prince Of Persia	174	83%
Prince Of Persia: The Forgotten Sands	193	68%
Prince Of Persia Trilogy	200	88%
Prison Break: The Conspiracy	191	40%
Prototype	181	76%
Prototype 2	219	75%
Puppeteer	236	70%
Pure	171	80%
Pure Football	194	69%
Quantum Of Solace	175	57%
Quantum Theory	197	29%
Race Driver: GRID	167	85%
Ratchet & Clank: Q-Force	227	52%
Racket Sports	198	37%
Rage	211	60%
Rainbow Six Vegas	155	88%
Rainbow Six Vegas 2	164	78%
Rango	203	54%
Ratchet & Clank: A Crack In Time	186	82%
Ratchet & Clank: All 4 One	211	68%
Ratchet & Clank: Tools Of Destruction	160	72%
Ratchet & Clank Trilogy HD	221	88%
Rayman Legends	235	83%
Rayman Origins	212	80%

*denotes import review

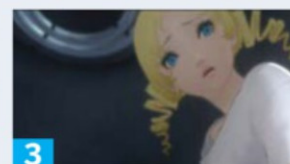
TOP TEN CEL-SHADED GAMES



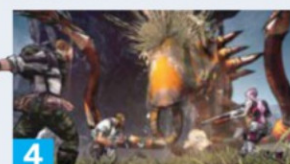
1
Okami



2
Ni No Kuni:
Wrath Of The White Witch



3
Catherine



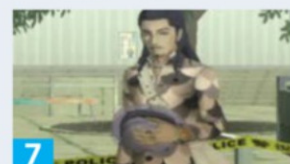
4
Borderlands 2



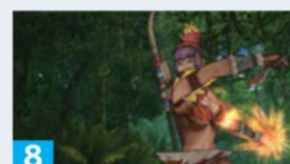
5
Afro Samurai



6
Tales Of Graces f



7
Shin Megami Tensei:
Lucifer's Call



8
Rogue Galaxy



9
Valkyria Chronicles

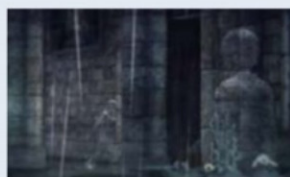


10
Dragon Quest VIII

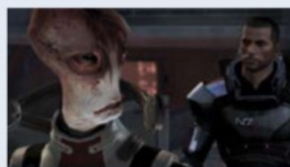
PLAY'S BEST GAMES IF YOU LIKE

PHIL COLLINS
PLAY: GRAND THEFT AUTO:
VICE CITY STORIES

Ever wanted to see Phil Collins but couldn't get hold of a ticket? Worry not – Rockstar has you covered; you're given to opportunity to watch him perform *In The Air Tonight* live.

CATCHING A COLD
PLAY: RAIN

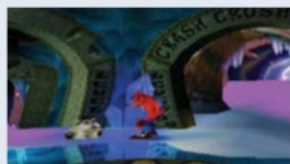
Rain, as far as we can tell, is a cold-catching simulator. The game revolves around a small child standing in the rain. Everything in *Rain* is a bit trippy – we reckon it's because the central character's off his head on Beechams.

XENOPHOBIA
PLAY: MASS EFFECT 3

If you're an isolationist sociopath who believes that humanity has a singular right to, y'know, the Universe, then boot up *Mass Effect* and do a playthrough as evil Shepard.

CLONES
PLAY: STAR WARS
BATTLEFRONT II

Clones. Clones everywhere. *Battlefront II* lets you do anything to them, and it never gets boring, either. Bring on the lightsaber beheadings.

POLAR BEARS
PLAY: CRASH BANDICOOT
2: CORTEX STRIKES BACK

Most games don't include even one polar bear, but *Crash 2* has loads. It also has a bear you can ride who will give you extra lives if you keep jumping on his face!

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Red Dead Redemption	193	92%
Red Faction: Armageddon	207	62%
Red Faction: Guerrilla	180	80%
Remember Me	232	61%
Resident Evil: Operation Raccoon City	217	33%
Resident Evil: Revelations HD	232	71%
Resident Evil 5	177	86%
Resident Evil 6	223	88%
Resistance: Fall Of Man	151	83%
Resistance 2	173	90%
Resistance 3	210	88%
Resonance Of Fate	191	79%
Ridge Racer 7	151	75%
Ridge Racer Unbounded	217	67%
Rise Of The Argonauts	176	58%
Risen 2: Dark Waters	222	64%
Rock Band	169	94%
Rock Band 2	179	96%
Rock Band 3	199	84%
Rocksmith	223	78%
Rogue Warrior	188	09%
Rugby World Cup 2011	209	49%
Rune Factory Oceans	220	51%
RUSE	197	82%
The Saboteur	187	67%
Sacred 2: Fallen Angel	180	76%
Saints Row 2	172	79%
Saints Row: The Third	211	88%
SBK Generations	220	51%
Saint Seiya: Sanctuary Battle	216	52%
Saw	186	52%
Saw II: Flesh & Blood	198	36%
Sega Mega Drive Ultimate Collection	177	85%
SBK 2011	206	70%
SBK Generations	220	54%
SBK X: Superbike World Championship	193	67%
Sega Rally	158	92%
Sengoku Basara: Samurai Heroes	198	76%
Shadows Of The Damned	207	79%
Shaun White Skateboarding	198	70%
Shaun White Snowboarding	173	72%
Shellshock 2: Blood Trails	177	32%
Shift 2: Unleashed	204	66%
The Shoot	199	76%
Silent Hill: Downpour	217	81%
Silent Hill HD Collection	217	76%
Silent Hill: Homecoming	174	64%
The Simpsons Game	160	82%
The Sims 3	199	87%
The Sims 3: Pets	212	70%
SingStar	159	80%
Singularity	195	80%
Skate	159	86%
Skate 2	175	82%
Skate 3	192	86%
Sleeping Dogs	222	80%
The Sly Collection	200	84%
Sly Cooper: Thieves In Time	230	60%
Sniper Elite V2	218	52%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior	206	45%
Sniper: Ghost Warrior 2	230	55%
SOCOM: Special Forces	205	63%
Sonic & Sega All-Stars Racing	190	78%
Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed	227	88%
Sonic Generations	212	70%
Sonic The Hedgehog	151	52%
Sonic Unleashed	175	48%
Sorcery	219	76%
SoulCalibur IV	169	94%
SoulCalibur V	214	80%
Spec Ops: The Line	220	59%
Spider-Man 3	155	33%
Spider-Man: Edge Of Time	212	38%
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions	197	69%
Spider-Man: Web Of Shadows	173	55%
Splatterhouse	200	58%
Splinter Cell Double Agent	153	79%
Split/Second: Velocity	192	90%
Sports Champions	196	83%
Sports Champions 2	225	65%
SSX	216	45%
Starhawk	219	81%
Star Ocean: The Last Hope International	190	63%
Star Trek	231	52%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed	171	65%
Star Wars: The Force Unleashed II	199	61%
Start The Party!	196	72%
Stormrise	178	51%
Stranglehold	159	65%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Street Fighter IV	176	95%
Street Fighter X Tekken	217	83%
Super Street Fighter IV: Arcade Edition	207	88%
Stuntman: Ignition	157	82%
SuperCar Challenge	183	66%
Superstars V8: Next Challenge	190	55%
Superstars V8 Racing	181	63%
Super Street Fighter IV	191	90%
Supremacy MMA	211	40%
Syndicate	216	78%
Tales Of Graces f	222	77%
Tales Of Xillia	234	70%
Tekken 6	184	94%
Tekken Tag Tournament 2	223	90%
Test Drive Ferrari Racing Legends	221	60%
Test Drive Unlimited 2	203	62%
The Amazing Spider-Man	221	61%
The Last Of Us	233	94%
 When <i>The Last Of Us</i> is good (winter), it's better than anything else this gen – we do not say that lightly.		
The Testament Of Sherlock Holmes	224	55%
The Walking Dead	231	92%
 <i>The Walking Dead</i> should be required playing for anyone who considers themselves a fan of our favourite medium.		
The Walking Dead: Survival Instinct	231	20%
Thor: God Of Thunder	206	38%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 10	181	69%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 11	194	60%
Tiger Woods PGA 12: The Masters	204	65%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 13	217	70%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 14	231	61%
Time Crisis 4	166	69%
Time Crisis: Razing Storm	199	58%
TimeShift	162	72%
TNA Impact!	171	71%
Tom Clancy's EndWar	173	80%
Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X.	177	75%
Tom Clancy's H.A.W.X. 2	196	69%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Blacklist	235	71%
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Trilogy HD	210	78%
Tomb Raider	229	90%
 Lara returns in this excellent reboot, but she doesn't have a very nice time. Her survivalist origin story is grim, daring, and brilliant.		
Tomb Raider Trilogy	204	86%
Tomb Raider: Underworld	173	83%
Tony Hawk's Project 8	151	85%
Tony Hawk's Proving Ground	160	72%
Tony Hawk: Ride	188	52%
Top Gun: Hard Lock	218	45%
Top Spin 3	168	71%
Top Spin 4	203	60%
Tornado Outbreak	186	56%
Toy Story 3	195	82%
Transformers: Dark Of The Moon	208	64%
Transformers: Fall Of Cybertron	223	73%
Transformers: Revenge Of The Fallen	182	41%
Transformers: The Game	156	34%
Transformers: War For Cybertron	194	80%
Trinity: Souls Of Zill O'll	202	56%
Trinity Universe	194	61%
Tron Evolution	200	17%
Turning Point: Fall Of Liberty	165	40%
Turok	163	46%
TV Superstars	199	53%
Twisted Metal	216	68%
Two Worlds II	203	64%
UFC Undisputed 2009	180	90%
UFC Undisputed 2010	193	88%
UFC Undisputed 3	215	82%
Ultimate Marvel vs Capcom 3	212	78%
Uncharted: Drake's Fortune	161	87%
Uncharted 2: Among Thieves	185	96%
Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception	212	90%
Unreal Tournament III	162	88%
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	151	54%
Valkyria Chronicles	173	82%
Vancouver 2010	189	76%
Vanquish	197	93%
Viking: Battle For Asgard	165	74%
Virtua Fighter 5	151	83%
Virtua Tennis 3	150	91%
Virtua Tennis 4	205	79%
Wanted: Weapons Of Fate	179	63%
Warhammer 40,000: Space Marine	210	51%

GAME	ISSUE	SCORE
Warhawk	157	84%
Warriors: Legends Of Troy	202	14%
Warriors Orochi 3	217	59%
Watchmen: The End Is Nigh	183	55%
Way Of The Samurai 3	190	16%
Wet	184	41%
Wheelman	178	72%
Where The Wild Things Are	188	56%
White Knight Chronicles	190	55%
White Knight Chronicles II	207	49%
Wolfenstein	183	72%
Wonderbook: Book Of Spells	226	80%
Worms Collection	224	85%
WRC: FIA World Rally Championship	197	76%
WRC 2: FIA World Rally Championship	211	63%
WRC 3 FIA World Rally Championship	225	75%
WSC Real II	204	69%
WWE All Stars	204	82%
WWE Legends Of WrestleMania	178	80%
WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2010	185	77%
WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2011	199	63%
WWE '12	212	50%
WWE 13	225	55%
X-Blades	178	54%
XCOM: Enemy Unknown	224	94%
 Thinking, planning, failing and dying is back in fashion: XCOM is a phenomenal reimagining of a classic title and an instant classic in its own right.		
X-Men Destiny	211	35%
X-Men Origins: Wolverine	179	71%
Yakuza: Dead Souls	216	60%
Yakuza 3	191	80%
Yakuza 4	203	79%
Zone Of The Enders HD Collection	226	81%

PS VITA LISTING



A-Men	217	70%
Army Corps Of Hell	217	64%
Assassin's Creed III: Liberation	225	76%
Everybody's Golf	215	86%
BlazBlue: Continuum Shift Extend	216	85%
Call Of Duty: Black Ops Declassified	227	18%
Dokuro	230	71%
Earth Defense Force 2017 Portable	230	82%
Escape Plan	216	81%
FIFA Football	216	80%
Gravity Rush	219	86%
Hustle Kings	216	81%
Killzone: Mercenary	236	88%
LittleBigPlanet	223	93%
Little Deviants	215	69%
Lumines Electric Symphony	216	85%
MGS HD Collection	221	70%
ModNation Racers: Road Trip	215	59%
Mortal Kombat	219	83%
MotorStorm RC	217	81%
Muramasa Rebirth	234	80%
New Little King's Story	224	70%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma Plus	217	72%
Ninja Gaiden Sigma 2 Plus	230	60%
Orgarhythm	230	55%
PlayStation All-Stars Battle Royale	225	80%
Persona 4 Golden	228	94%
 <i>Persona 4 Golden</i> is one of the best RPGs around, with great characterisation, a gripping story and smart combat mechanics.		
Puddle	222	82%
Rayman Origins	216	84%
Reality Fighters	215	52%
Resistance: Burning Skies	219	54%
Ridge Racer	216	48%
Silent Hill: Book Of Memories	225	32%
Soul Sacrifice	232	85%
Sound Shapes	223	88%
Super Monkey Ball: Banana Splitz	224	78%
Sumoni: Demon Arts	230	46%
Super Stardust Delta	216	84%
Touch My Katamari	216	83%
Ultimate Marvel vs Capcom 3	216	80%
Uncharted: Golden Abyss	215	83%
Unit 13	216	67%
Velocity Ultra	233	80%
Virtua Tennis 4: World Tour Edition	215	81%
Virtue's Last Reward	227	84%
WipEout 2048	215	87%

GAME

ISSUE

SCORE

PS STORE LISTING



1942: Joint Strike	170	74%
3-On-3 NHL Arcade	177	62%
After Burner Climax	193	91%
Age Of Booty	172	81%
Alien Breed: Impact	196	80%
Alien Breed 2: Assault	201	82%
Alien Breed 3: Descent	204	61%
All Zombies Must Die!	214	64%
Amy	215	19%
Anarchy: Rush Hour	194	73%
Aqua Panic	193	68%
Armageddon Riders	207	65%
Atelier Meruru: The Apprentice Of Arland	221	35%
Atelier Ayesha: The Alchemist Of Dust	230	60%
Back To The Future: It's About Time	204	71%
The Baconing	210	72%
Battlefield 1943	182	89%
Beat Hazard Ultra	213	79%
Beat Sketcher	201	85%
Beyond Good & Evil HD	207	86%
Bionic Commando Rearmed	169	88%
Bionic Commando Rearmed 2	203	61%
Blacklight: Tango Down	200	64%
Blade Kitten	197	72%
Blast Factor	152	72%
Blokus	202	54%
BloodRayne: Betrayal	211	62%
Blue Toad Murder Files: The Mysteries Of Little Riddle Episode I	188	65%
Bomberman Ultra	185	82%
Braid	188	93%
Brothers: A Tale Of Two Sons	233	83%
Burn Zombie Burn	178	85%
Burnout Crash	211	79%
The Cave	230	77%
Calling All Cars	155	81%
Call Of Juarez: Gunslinger	232	80%
Castle Crashers	200	88%
Castlevania: Harmony Of Despair	212	67%
Catan	195	85%
Chime Super Deluxe	203	80%
Comet Crash	186	84%
Comix Zone	210	62%
Command & Conquer: Red Alert	16	79%
Command & Conquer Red Alert: Retaliation	176	55%
Command & Conquer: Red Alert 3	168	70%
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Command & Conquer	175	44%
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Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped	174	82%
Crash Commando	174	80%
Crash Team Racing	170	79%
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Critter Crunch	188	91%
Crystal Defenders	184	48%
Cubixx HD	207	76%
Dark Mist	164	53%
Darkstalkers Resurrection	230	82%
Dead Nation	201	86%
Dead Space: Extraction	203	88%
Dead Space: Ignition	199	47%
DeathSpank	195	83%
Derrick The Deathfin	227	79%
Digger HD	186	52%
Double Dragon Neon	224	37%
Droplitz	184	91%
Dungeons & Dragons: Chronicles Of Mystara	233	80%
Dust 514	233	51%
Earthworm Jim HD	196	89%
Eat Them!	202	60%
echochrome	169	85%
echochrome II	202	83%
Elefunk	170	45%
Euforia	212	85%
Explodemon	203	70%
Far Cry 3: Blood Dragon	231	85%
Fat Princess	183	65%
Fatal Inertia EX	168	65%
Final Fight: Double Impact	193	90%

GAME

ISSUE

SCORE

Flight Control HD	198	85%
Flock!	179	70%
fIOW	151	90%
Flower	176	85%
Frogger: Hyper Arcade Edition	221	55%
From Dust	211	82%
Funky Lab Rat	201	70%
Galaxy Fight	215	27%
Gatling Gears	207	62%
Geon	175	71%
Go! Puzzle	152	58%
Gotham City Impostors	216	78%
Gravity Crash	187	85%
Greed Corp	191	75%
Greg Hastings Paintball 2	219	22%
GTI Club+	174	72%
Guardians Of Middle-Earth	227	71%
Gundemonium Collection	197	80%
Gunstar Heroes	181	85%
Hamsterball	194	72%
Heavy Weapon	187	75%
Hotline Miami	233	85%
The House Of The Dead 4	218	82%
Hustle Kings	190	87%
Hyperbolloid HD	188	70%
I Am Alive	217	64%
Inferno Pool	181	81%
Invincible Tiger: The Legend Of Han Tao	185	70%
Joe Danger	194	96%
Journey	216	87%
Jurassic Park: The Game	214	32%
Kick-Ass The Game	194	60%
Killzone HD	225	65%
Kung-Fu Live	201	42%
Landit Bandit	195	66%
Lara Croft And The Guardian Of Light	198	90%
The Last Guy	171	91%
Lead & Gold: Gangs Of The Wild West	193	65%
Limbo	209	90%
Linger In Shadows	173	69%
LocoRoco Cocoreccho!	159	80%
Lumines Supernova	178	90%
Madden NFL Arcade	188	58%
Mad Riders	220	70%
Magic: The Gathering: Duels Of The Planeswalkers	202	84%
Magic: The Gathering: Duels Of The Planeswalkers 2012	208	70%
Marvel vs Capcom 2	182	90%
Matt Hazard: Blood Bath And Beyond	189	69%
Mega Man 9	172	75%
Mega Man 10	192	82%
Microbot	202	51%
Monkey Island 2: Special Edition	195	94%
Motorhead	173	60%
Namco Museum Essentials	193	60%
NBA Jam: On Fire Edition	212	64%
Nights Into Dreams...	224	75%
Noby Noby Boy	177	85%
Nucleus	155	82%
Numb!ast	183	60%
Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath HD	214	86%
Okami HD	225	90%
Outland	207	72%
OutRun Online Arcade	180	80%
Pac-Man Championship Edition DX	201	91%
Payday: The Heist	213	88%
Pain	183	69%
Peggle	189	94%
Pinballistik	215	75%
PixelJunk 4am	220	40%
PixelJunk Eden	169	67%
PixelJunk Monsters	163	94%
PixelJunk Shooter	187	93%
PixelJunk Shooter 2	204	90%
PixelJunk SideScroller	213	77%
Piyotama	162	62%
Planet Minigolf	196	58%
Poker Night 2	232	55%
Polar Panic	190	65%
Prince Of Persia Classic	173	67%
Puddle	216	76%
The Punisher: No Mercy	182	49%
Puzzle Chronicles	194	70%
Puzzle Dimension	208	81%



Okami is lovely, just as we remember it, and has been given a treatment that takes it far beyond the muffled visual quality of the PS2 original.

GAME

ISSUE

SCORE

Puzzle Quest Galactrix	181	68%
Quantum Conundrum	221	90%
Rag Doll Kung Fu: Fists Of Plastic	179	83%
Rainbow Moon	221	68%
Ratchet & Clank: Quest For Booty	170	69%
Renegade Ops	211	78%
Resident Evil 4 HD	210	93%
Resident Evil Code Veronica X	211	72%
Resident Evil Chronicles HD Collection	221	82%
Retro City Rampage	228	78%
Revenge Of The Wounded Dragons	191	60%
Riff: Everyday Shooter	162	86%
Risk: Nations	202	80%
Rock Band Blitz	223	80%
Rocketbirds: Hardboiled Chicken	212	82%
Rocket Knight	194	74%
Rocketmen: Axis Of Evil	165	63%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playhouse Episode 1	194	90%
Sam & Max: The Devil's Playhouse Episode 2	194	92%
Sega Rally Online Arcade	208	74%
Savage Moon	175	87%
Scott Pilgrim Vs The World	197	77%
The Secret Of Monkey Island SE	195	92%
Section 8: Prejudice	209	80%
Shank	197	86%
Shatter	183	91%
Shoot Many Robots	217	81%
The Simpsons: Arcade Game	216	54%
Siren Blood Curse	170	62%
Skullgirls	218	88%
Smash Cars	184	50%
Soldner-X 2: Final Prototype	195	70%
Sonic Adventure	198	63%
Sonic Adventure 2	225	69%
Sonic CD	214	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode I	199	82%
Sonic The Hedgehog 4: Episode II	220	40%
Spin Jam	174	32%
Stacking	203	88%
Star Trek: D-A-C	189	57%
Star Wars Pinball	230	79%
Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike Online Edition	209	92%
Strength Of The Sword 3	234	81%
Superfrog HD	234	41%
Super Puzzle Fighter II HD Turbo Remix	168	78%
Super Rub-A-Dub	151	83%
Supersonic Acrobatic Rocket-Powered Battle-Cars	177	65%
Super Stardust HD	155	74%
Super Street Fighter II Turbo HD Remix	176	72%
Switchball	191	75%
Swords And Soldiers	199	88%
Tales Of Monkey Island	196	91%
Tank Battles	186	68%
Tekken 5: Dark Resurrection Online	161	87%
Tetris	202	84%
Terraria	232	85%
TMNT: Turtles In Time Re-shelled	186	57%
Tokyo Jungle	223	81%
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater HD	223	73%
Top Darts	202	71%
Top Gun	198	53%
Topotai: Spinning Through The Worlds	183	61%
ToyHome	162	31%
Trash Panic	181	79%
Trials Of Topaq	159	50%
Trine	184	85%
Tumble	198	70%
Uncharted: Fight For Fortune	227	83%
Under Siege	207	71%
Unearthed: Trail Of Ibn Battuta: Episode 1	233	05%
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Uno	189	85%
Vagrant Story	189	82%
Vandal Hearts: Flames Of Judgment	192	87%
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Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?	214	79%
WipEout HD	172	84%
Wizorb	222	78%
Worms 2: Armageddon	198	87%
Worms Battle Islands	201	80%
Worms Crazy Golf	213	82%
Worms: Ultimate Mayhem	217	80%
X-Men Arcade	203	60%
Yars' Revenge	206	57%
Zack Zero	215	73%
Zen Pinball 2	224	90%
Zombie Apocalypse: Never Die Alone	213	69%
Zuma	182	78%

*denotes import review

PLAYING THE PLAYLIST

Here are the games we've been enjoying recently



WHAT (have they been playing?)

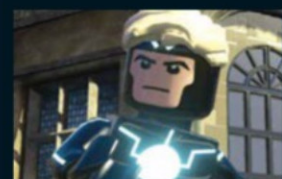
Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag

WHY (was it chosen?)

Because pirates are awesome

LUKE ALBIGÉS

OKAY, SO HAND-to-hand combat still demands as much skill as opening a door. But even so, I can't help but love *Black Flag*. The sailing, naval combat and exploration are all awesome, as is the amazing sense of atmosphere. Ubisoft might stumble on gameplay every now and again but it absolutely nails both setting and historical feel every damn time. With so much to do, I'll be playing this long into next year if I want the Platinum. And I do. I really, really do.



WHAT (have they been playing?)

Lego Marvel Super Heroes

WHY (was it chosen?)

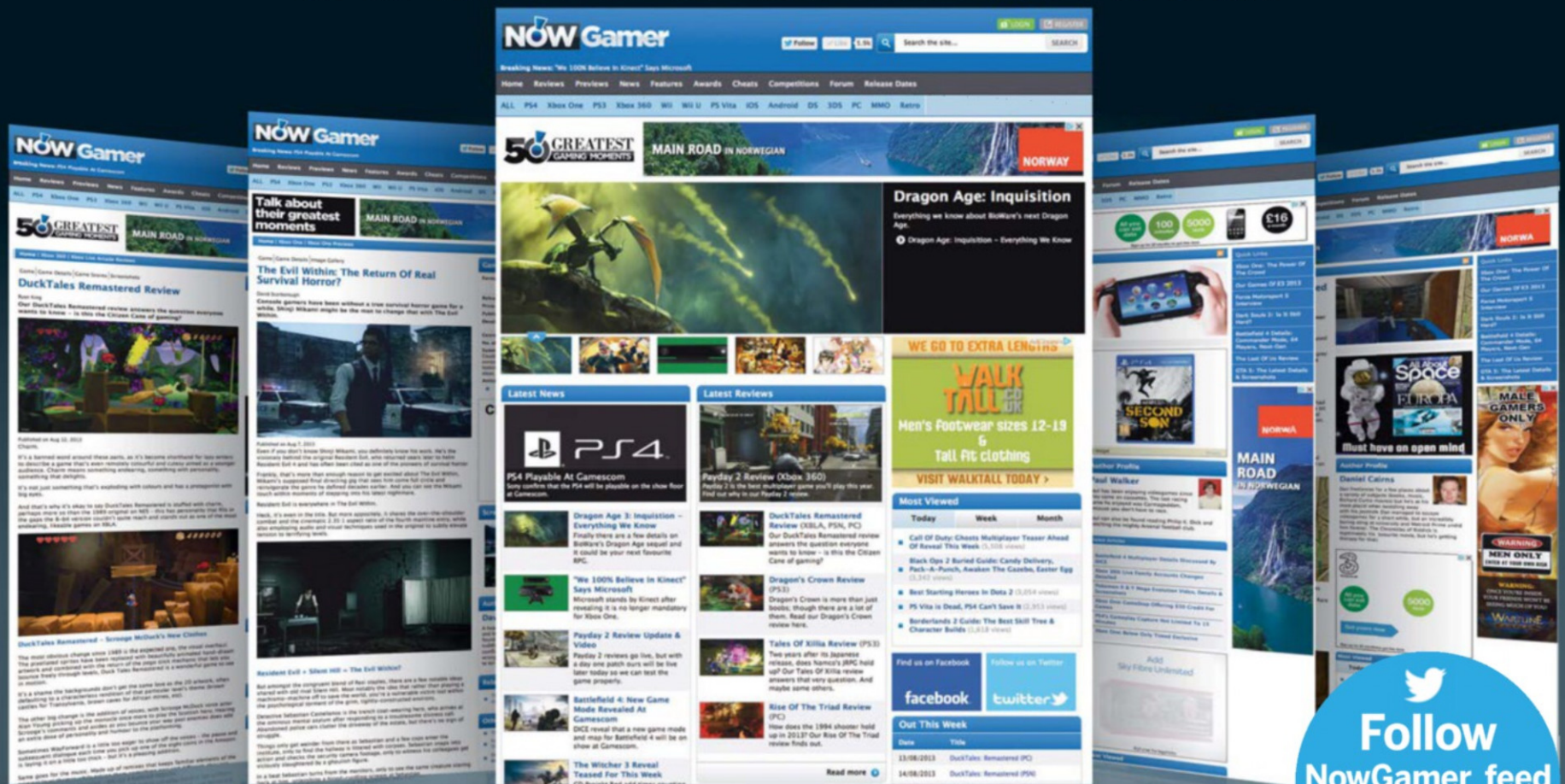
Because I am a big nerd

SAM SMITH

SURE, IT'S NOT exactly the best example of a next-gen game, but who cares? I've been waiting bloody ages for a Marvel game after the excellent *Lego Batman 2*, and *Lego Marvel Super Heroes* does not disappoint in the slightest. Any game that lets me muck around as tiny plastic versions of Daredevil and Hawkeye automatically gets my approval. This is a great game and definitely worthy of your attention.

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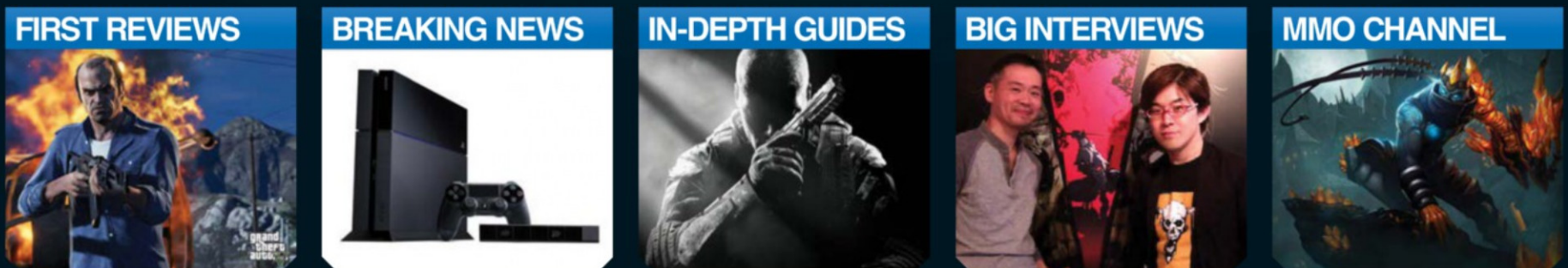


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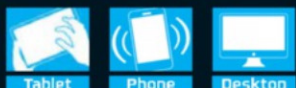
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